



THE TIME TRAVERLER'S LA RONDE
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EXT. NAPA VALLEY VINEYARD - DUSK

LEONARD SULLIVAN (39) has a look about him that suggests he's made peace with being alone. His skin is warm from the sun, and he wears a thick unruly beard, jeans, and a dirty flannel. He walks through the vineyard, checking his grapes, bending down to rub his fingers through the dirt, touches the leaves, smells the vine...

This is his sanctuary. He walks on, as we move to a--

WIDER ANGLE-- and see, throughout the vineyard, A DOZEN HOVERING DRONES surveying the vines and conducting targeted waterings.

That's odd. And then we see why:

CARD: NAPA VALLEY - AUGUST 2154 Then under it:

ULTIMATE DATE -- NOVEMBER 499 AT (AFTER TIME)

Leonard walks. Alone.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Leonard watches TV. Or rather, he watches a HOLOGRAPHIC SCREEN projected at the foot of his bed.

REPORTER

The Quintennial Cup continues tomorrow with the semi-final match as German Captain Rolf Mueller leads the underdog nineteenth century team against Brazilian super star Paolo Johnson for the twenty-first century...

SOUND OF DINNNNG.

Above the B-ROLL of the Brazilian super star Paolo Johnson, the text: **NEW VIDEO MESSAGE FROM: MINISTRY OF HEALTH.**

Leonard waves his hand toward the hologram. It shrinks in size as it glides toward him. Leonard taps the surface of the hologram, opening his **VIDEO MESSAGES**. He presses **PLAY**.

FULL SCREEN VIDEO:

The VIDEO has an opening title card that reads: **MINISTRY OF HEALTH.**

A quick PIANO INTRO accompanies the text. Over the piano we hear a voice-over say...

VOICE-OVER

This is a message from the Ministry of Health's Inter-Time Hospital and Research Facility.

The video cuts to a young man sitting at a desk. (He's dressed, for reasons that might not be clear to us now, in attire we recognize as EARLY 1960's.)

YOUNG MAN

Hello. This is a message for Leonard Sullivan. Mr. Sullivan, I'm calling from the ID ward of the Inter-time Hospital and Research Facility. The doctor would like to meet with you...

That gets Leonard's attention.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

...regarding your father's condition. There is some urgency to the matter so please do schedule a time as quickly-

HOUSE - LATER

Leonard, holding his phone, paces in his boxers and a white shirt.

LEONARD

Yes. Yes. Yes, I-
(beat)

Yes. Can I just ask? Is he okay, my dad? Is he healthy? Or as healthy as we can-

(beat)

Yes. No, no. I can be there tomorrow. Are you in the same location? In Paris?

(jotting down an address)

Okay. And when are you located now?

EXT. HYPERLOOP TRAIN PLATFORM - MORNING

Leonard, standing before the **NAPA VALLEY** platform sign, watches as the train comes to an incredibly fast but graceful stop.

INT. TRAIN - CONTINUOUS

Leonard enters. There are seats available, but he settles for standing room. The train starts again. Outside the window, the exterior blurs. This train *moves*.

We see some of the other passengers using their holographic devices to display various videos in front of them. Some of them use it to read the newspaper, swiping their hands to turn the page, but most are watching a soccer match. At once, they all groan at a shot just barely missed.

Leonard notices one woman using her device to read a book. She's pretty. She looks up and notices him. He's nervous and looks away. He turns back. She's shifted her body away from him.

The train stops again.

We see the platform sign. **SAN FRANCISCO**. Yes. We just travelled from Napa Valley to San Francisco in the course of one awkward interaction and a missed goal.

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO - HYPERLOOP PLATFORM

Leonard crosses the platform where SELF DRIVING TAXIS attached to monorails are lined up for commuters. Leonard enters one.

INT. SELF DRIVING TAXI - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the car is almost unrecognizable to us. No steering wheel, no dashboard, just two pairs of seats facing each other with a table in the middle.

LEONARD
Air and time port.

TAXI
Destination. Air and Time Port.

The car ascends the monorail above the city. Roads and streets have been replaced with tree-lined walking trails, as though buildings had sprung up organically inside of a giant park.

Outside, we see San Francisco's FERRY BUILDING. Behind that, the BBAY BRIDGE; behind that, an impossibly huge projection of the SOCCER MATCH being DISPLAYED AGAINST THE SKY over the bay.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - LATER

Leonard walks through the terminal alone. We notice lots of families. People laughing on benches. People using their devices to display video calls. And Leonard, alone.

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Leonard puts on his seat belt as the engine revs up.

PILOT (INTERCOM)
Flight 1296 San Francisco to Paris.
Please prepare for take off.

The plane, with no acceleration at all, just explodes off the tarmac. The passengers shake.

Leonard closes his eyes. The sunlight outside dips in, then out, from the window.

Leonard takes a deep breath, then...

Darkness... for just a moment before the cabin lights fade up.

It's calm now. Leonard exhales as we notice he...

Floats. Weightless. We're in Zero-G.

He looks outside. There's earth, the eastern United States, the Atlantic Ocean, Europe... Then, just like that-

PILOT (INTERCOM) (CONT'D)
Passengers, please prepare for
landing.

Leonard takes another deep breath and...

We're back inside the atmosphere. The chaos returns. Leonard closes his eyes.

INT. AIRPORT - MORNING

Leonard follows a sign toward: **TIMEPORT**. He passes families, couples, and people on the phone laughing.

CONDUCTOR (PRE-LAP)
Weather for Paris, France on the
date of July 15th, 1962 will be
unseasonably cool with a high of 20
degrees occurring just after 1500.

INT. TIME MACHINE - AFTERNOON

The time machine looks like a train car made entirely of glass. Seats face toward the center where we find a small control panel.

The panel is currently occupied by a CONDUCTOR- who in this moment is standing and speaking to the few passengers dotted throughout the vessel. None of whom seem particularly impressed by what's about to happen...

CONDUCTOR
Sixteen minutes of light rain will
begin at 1722.

Through the machine's glass floor, we see what looks like a complicated SERIES OF CIRCULAR TUBES.

We begin to hear a WHIRRING NOISE... What looks like a BALL in one of the tubes begins looping around.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)

On this date in original history the Tour De France concluded in Paris. It was won by Jacques Anquetil.

The ball ACCELERATES. It no longer looks like a moving object...just a solid circle.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)

You're traveling through time with Aevum Timelines. My name is Francois Greene and I am your conductor. Please relax, and prepare for travel...

Something POPS. Then a CRACK. A flash of light.

CONDUCTOR (CONT'D)

The next time you see me will be exactly one minute in the future, and roughly six centuries in the past.

The WHIR crescendos into a howling SHRIEK. The POPS and CRACKS increase, more light streaks, and then SNAP-

The time machine DISAPPEARS...

...as we...

SMASH CUT TO:

TITLE CARD:

THE TIME TRAVELER'S LA RONDE

OVER BLACK:

SILENCE... THEN:

VOICE (V.O.)
*If you stop for just a minute, you
 can hear the sounds of time.*

SOUND of FILM REELING through a projector.

VOICE (V.O.)
Film reeling through a projector...

Soft, out of focus colors splash onto the screen. Orange. Yellow. Blue. Green. Fading in and out. Overlapping. Creating new colors.

VOICE (V.O.)
The cracks of ice melting.

SOUND of an ICE CUBE CRACKING.

BENEATH THAT: SOUND OF GLACIERS BREAKING...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Or the silence that exists between
 a question being asked, and a
 question being answered. Who are
 you? And when? Are you in the
 theater now? Are you happy? What do
 you regret? Who do you miss?*
 (beat)
*And what, exactly, is it that you
 want?*

CECILE (PRE-LAP)
 (in French)
 What do you want?

INT. PARISIAN CAFE - NIGHT

We're on a MAN, a dashing man (50's). He looks like an elder statesman dressed for a white tie gala. We'll refer to this man as THE NARRATOR. The Narrator lifts a knowing smile toward the waitress--

CECILE (mid 30's) tired, but content.

NARRATOR
 (English)
 I need a minute to look at the
 menu.

We're inside a busy cafe. It looks and feels like the 1960's, as though Jean Luc Godard might be beating out *Breathless* on a typewriter at the corner table. Music is playing. People are talking.

CECILE
 (sweetly)
 Take your time.

The Narrator watches Cecile go. And then-- looks at us:

NARRATOR
 Of course, you could ask me the same questions. Who am I? What do I want? What do I regret? All of that you'll see. The important questions now are: Where, When, Why? The answers to which is this: The end of La Ronde.

The Narrator gives us an *I-know-you're-confused-and-I-promise-that's-okay* smile. He looks toward the entrance of the cafe.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 (pointing outside)
 You see the couple there?

Outside, a couple comes toward the cafe.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 They're about to come into this cafe. If I leave now, they'll see an open table and take it. But we can't have that. We're about to create all sorts of mischief, you and I, in order to ensure that this table is available at precisely the right time, for precisely the right person.

SOUND of CHIME!

The couple peer inside the cafe. We see them talking...

It looks busy.

Let's try the place across the street.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 Perfect.

The Narrator stands. Puts on his coat and gloves.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 It hasn't been easy. We've lied; we've broken hearts; we've even watched someone pass...all to get here. Well not here, but...

The Narrator reaches toward another table and picks up a menu.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 (in french)
 Do you mind?

PATRON
 (in french)
 Not at all.

NARRATOR
 Merci.

The Narrator uses the menu to hide his face from--

SOUND of *CHIME!*

--Leonard, who's just walked into the cafe.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 (still to us)
Here.

Leonard is no longer the scruffy looking winemaker we just met. He's cleaned up. He's wearing a tuxedo.

Leonard unbuttons his coat, glances across the cafe, and finds--

Cecile. The waitress. She's laughing with another customer.

Leonard freezes. He can't catch his breath... *It can't be.*

And now, it's Cecile's turn to notice Leonard. She does a double take. She stares too. A slow smile. Her eyes welling with tears.

It's as though nothing else exists. They walk toward each other, bumping into other customers and other waiters, but never taking their eyes off one another.

Then, they arrive in the center of the cafe. They embrace, their lips only inches away, as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE - CONTINUOUS

The Narrator looks through the window. He watches Leonard and Cecile.

He watches for a long time, until finally:

NARRATOR
 There are emotions you feel in life
 for which no one has bothered to
 invent a word.
 (looking at us)
 This is one.

He begins to walk. He smiles.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

As for the other questions: I am the conductor of this carousel, La Ronde. I exist through an infinite and limited stretch of inter-dimensional time. I am everywhere and nowhere, nudging and guiding our players, in order to fulfill an eternal quest of redemption. But, you'll learn more about that soon... As for us, where are we?

He looks around.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The twentieth century streets of Paris?

The lights inside of shops, cafes, street lamps, and windows begin to dim like a swarm of fireflies fading away.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

A soundstage in Los Angeles?

The Narrator continues walking. The streets of Paris end. We're on an enormous sound stage. The lights in the stage continue turning off, just as the street lamps had before, until a single lamp silhouettes our narrator.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Or are we here?

And then that final lamp goes black, and we're...

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In the dark, as though our eyes were closed, like a children playing make believe. Where anything can be true, so long as it can be imagined. Yes. This is where we are. We're here:

EXT. NAPA VALLEY - STREET - DAWN

SOUND OF A BICYCLE *CLING CLING...*

A BICYCLE FLIES THROUGH FRAME and we WHIP PAN to FOLLOW IT.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Napa Valley. 1820. With our first and last player of La Ronde...

Riding the bike is CECILE. She's five years younger now, and not yet a waitress.

She rides down a rural road. Cecile is dressed in NURSES SCRUBS that might resemble, but do not exactly match, 19th century style.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Cecile: who's currently in love
 with Leonard, the son of Marie, who
 had previously married Harvey...*

Now we're ahead of Cecile as she turns onto a cobblestone street.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*...who became incapable of loving
 after sharing an unspoken affection
 for Eloise, who once spent the
 night with a woman named Nona, who
 became a man named Roland and had
 his heart broken by Antoine...*

Cecile turns onto a busier road and enters Napa's small metropolis.

(If it happens you're familiar with 1820's Napa Valley, this version won't look familiar at all. The architecture is limited to the style and technology of early 19th century, but it is very much lived in, developed, and flourishing.)

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*...who experienced love at first
 sight upon meeting Claire, who
 would later have an affair with
 Sanjay, who is about to be asked
 for a divorce by...*

INT. CECILE'S HOME - MORNING

Cecile enters her apartment, wheeling her bike inside.

SANJAY (O.S.)
 Cecile?

CECILE
 Sanjay?

We follow Cecile as she unbuckles her helmet and walks down the front hall.

CARD: CECILE and SANJAY - MAY, 1820

ULTIMATE DATE: OCTOBER, 494 AT

Sanjay hollers from the kitchen.

SANJAY (O.S.)
 Hey! I'm sorry- I didn't have time
 to make a proper breakfast.

CECILE
(annoyed but hiding it)
That's okay.

SANJAY (O.S.)
You want a bowl of oatmeal?

CECILE
Nooo. It's okay.

SANJAY (O.S.)
How was work?

CECILE
It was... it was good.

SANJAY (O.S.)
Yeah?

CECILE
Yeah. My patient, Marie, you know?

SANJAY (O.S.)
Uh-huh.

Cecile sits on the couch and takes off her shoes.

CECILE
I realized that tomorrow will be
one year since I started working
with her.

Cecile waits for a response. Nothing.

CECILE (CONT'D)
Sanj?

SANJAY (O.S.)
Huh?

CECILE
I said tomorrow will be one year
since I started with her.

SANJAY (O.S.)
Oh, yeah.

CECILE
It's unusual.

SANJAY (O.S.)
Yeah.

CECILE
Normally patients pass away after a
few weeks at most, but here she is
twelve months later.

SANJAY (O.S.)

Yeah?

CECILE

She says- she tells her son- Her son comes in every night to read to her, you know?

(beat)

Sanj?

SANJAY

Yeah!

CECILE

Her son comes in every night to read to her, you know?

SANJAY

Yeah.

CECILE

And she tells him- she tells him that she won't die until he falls in love.

(to herself)

It's funny. It's sweet.

She says it's sweet, but then we see a look of sadness.

CECILE (CONT'D)

Anyway. Here she still is. One year later.

SANJAY (30's) enters from the kitchen. He's reading a letter. He clearly hasn't been listening.

CECILE (CONT'D)

Sanjay?

SANJAY

Yeah.

(finally looking up)

Sorry, which patient is this?

Alfonso?

Cecile just looks at him. It's heartbreaking how little he cares.

CECILE

No. *Alonso*. Not Alfonso. And no. Alonso passed away a while... a while ago. Nevermind.

SANJAY

(realizing)

I'm sorry. Cora's people are asking to move the interview up again.

(MORE)

SANJAY (CONT'D)

It's always these really polite letters like, 'would it be okay if'... 'hope it's not a burden that', as though I have any choice, you know?

CECILE

Yeah.

SANJAY

It's okay. It just leaves me less time to prepare.

She brushes passed him. Cold.

CECILE

Uh-huh.

Sanjay-- clocking that.

Cecile goes into the kitchen.

Now we're with Sanjay as Cecile hollers to him.

SANJAY

You okay?

CECILE (O.S.)

Yeah.

She's not. Sanjay knows it.

He follows her...

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

She's filling a TEA KETTLE.

SANJAY

I'm sorry I didn't make breakfast. I know that was part of the deal-

CECILE

I don't care about breakfast.

SANJAY

I know, but that was part of the deal. It's just I really have to prep.

CECILE

(trying to be convincing)
It's fine. Really. I don't care about breakfast.

She places the kettle on a grate over a small fire oven and exits the kitchen.

SANJAY
Really? Because it feels like you
do.

He follows her through the...

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CECILE
I don't. I mean, you're right. That
was part of the deal, but honestly
I don't care.

SANJAY
I do it most days.

...and into the...

BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cecile changes. It isn't glamorous. Just another marital
dispute while one person changes their clothes without
fanfare.

CECILE
I know.

SANJAY
I just couldn't today because-

CECILE
I know, I know.
(with subtle mocking)
You have to prep.

Sanjay starts to look annoyed.

SANJAY
What was that?

CECILE
What?

SANJAY
"You have to prep".

CECILE
You do!

SANJAY
So why did you say it like that?

She looks at him. *Let's be real...*

SANJAY (CONT'D)
You don't think I have to prepare?

CECILE

It's an interview with a pop star for a 19th century teen magazine.

SANJAY

What's that supposed to mean?

CECILE

It means you're going to ask her, '*What were you like in high school?*' and '*What's the best part of being famous?*' How much preparation could you possibly need?

SANJAY

Yeah. I guess that's true. Although, I suppose you might also consider that I'm interviewing a, you know, actual human being with an entire life's worth of events that compile together, and give her a unique perspective of the world. But yeah, '*What were you like in high school?*' I'll be sure to write that down.

Now, it's his turn to leave.

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sanjay gathers his stuff to leave.

Cecile follows him.

CECILE

I was trying to tell you about my night. I was talking about work -- about my patient, who's dying -- and I was trying to tell you about it, but you weren't even listening.

SANJAY

I was listening.

CECILE

No, you weren't.

SANJAY

You were talking about, whatever, *Alonso!*

CECILE

No. I wasn't. I just told you a minute ago he passed away. He died. A guy I worked for died. People die in my line of work-

SANJAY
Ohhh, no-

CECILE
And you can't be bothered to spare
five minutes to hear about it.

SANJAY
Is that what this is about? How you
think your work is more important
than mine?

CECILE
My work is objectively more
important than yours. But no...

SANJAY
Okay.

Sanjay leaves again, down the hallway toward the front door.

Cecile follows him. Gloves off.

CECILE
...that's not what this is about.
This, apparently, is about me
cracking some facade where you've
somehow convinced yourself that
what you do is important at all.

SUDDENLY -- the TEA KETTLE WHISTLES.

SANJAY
Fuck you.

CECILE
And it's about fucking breakfast!
Wake up earlier!

Cecile walks into the...

KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...and turns off the kettle. Sanjay follows.

SANJAY
You know what!? I'm sorry I didn't
live up to my potential. I'm sorry
I didn't become a Pulitzer Prize
winning investigative journalist, I
really am. I know you thought you
were marrying Nellie Bly, but
instead you married...
(unable to find an
analogy)
Whatever. Whoever I am. For the
teen magazine.

CECILE
(mocking)
"Whatever. Whoever I am". There's
that Pulitzer Prize winning
potential, firing on all cylinders!

SANJAY
God, Cecile!

CECILE
Sanjay, the only person who cares
that you didn't live up to your
potential by winning a Pulitzer
Prize is you. And that, my love, is
because the only person who thinks
you had the potential to win a
Pulitzer Prize in the first place
is also you.

SANJAY
God, Cecile, that's- God. How is it
when I do something wrong, you find
some way to make me the victim.

CECILE
You, the victim?! God! If you're
the victim, why am I the one who
comes home to the smell of perfume
that isn't mine!

SANJAY
Don't- Don't go down that road. I
made one mistake, and it was
terrible, but it's... It isn't fair
for you to play it like a trump
card every time we get into trivial
arguments about me not making
breakfast.

CECILE
I don't care about breakfast!

SANJAY
You just said you did!

CECILE
And, it wasn't just one mistake. It
was a decision...a decision by a
selfish person, who's incapable of
making anyone - but himself -
happy.

SANJAY
That's not true.

CECILE
Oh, no?

SANJAY
 No. It's only you I don't make
 happy. And it isn't that I'm
 incapable of it, it's that I don't
 give enough of a shit to try.

That knocks Cecile back a little bit.

CECILE
 And why's that?

SANJAY
 Because of how incredibly sad you
 make me.

Sanjay grabs his briefcase. He piles the last of his things
 into it.

We see Cecile. She looks miserable. She watches him. He looks
 miserable, too.

CECILE
 Sanjay.

She says it as though she's about to apologize...

He turns to her.

There's a moment. They look at each other. It isn't anger, or
 sadness, it's just exhausted apathy.

And then:

CECILE (CONT'D)
 We have to get a divorce.

ON SANJAY. Dumbstruck. FREEZE FRAME.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*You would be forgiven for assuming
 that, in this moment, Sanjay Patel
 was quietly replaying the entirety
 of his life with Cecile. The night
 they met.*

CECILE AND SANJAY MONTAGE:

BAR - NIGHT

Sanjay and Cecile make eye contact from across the bar.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Their first kiss.

ELEVATED TRAIN - NIGHT

The city train has clear walls making it look invisible. Sanjay and Cecile stand on it. It almost looks like they're flying. They kiss.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Their first-

BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Cecile. Gasping.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Their first-

PARK - DAY

It's a picnic. Sanjay, close to Cecile, whispering:

SANJAY
I love you.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Their apartment is sleek with walls at varying degrees of opacity and shifting color. They sit cuddled on the couch, each reading from a different tablet.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*You would be forgiven for assuming,
too, that Sanjay was recalling how
their lust had faded, and their
love grew. Through-*

BAR - NIGHT

Sitting across from each other. Happy. Having a great conversation. Laughing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Through-

BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sleeping in bed.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Through-

BATHROOM - MORNING

Sanjay brushing his teeth while Cecile pees.

SANJAY
(through his toothpaste)
I love you.

She laughs.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*How their love faded, and their
apathy grew. After-*

BAR - NIGHT

Cecile on her tablet. Sanjay resenting her.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After-

BEDROOM - NIGHT

Boring emotionless sex that neither seems to enjoy.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
After-

APARTMENT (THE 19TH CENTURY APARTMENT WE MET THEM IN) - NIGHT

Sanjay rushing out the door.

SANJAY
Gotta run.

CECILE
(without looking)
Bye.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And their fights.

APARTMENT - DAY

Fighting.

SANJAY
That's bullshit. Ohhhh! That's
unfair!

NARRATOR (V.O.)
All of their fights.

APARTMENT - NIGHT

Cecile, screaming. Sanjay, crying.

CECILE
How many times?! How many times
were you with her-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Their last fight.

APARTMENT - MORNING

We've seen this before.

SANJAY
Because of how incredibly sad you
make me.

END MONTAGE.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

We're back on the FROZEN FRAME of Sanjay's dumbstruck face.
Cecile has just asked for a divorce.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*You would be forgiven for assuming
all of this, but you would be
wrong. Sanjay Patel, in this
moment, was recalling a piece of
advice he'd received seventeen
years earlier.*

UNFREEZE:

SANJAY
(mumbling to himself)
Make love for days... and kill
yourself.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

But, this isn't the iconic New York City skyline we're used
to. It is, believe it or not, even more massive.

CARD: SANJAY and CLAIRE - JULY, 2402 - NEW YORK CITY

ULTIMATE DATE: JULY, 478 AT

EXT. NEW YORK - STREET - DAY

The Narrator walks toward a large building and speaks with
us:

NARRATOR

Of course, we have some idea of what happens to Cecile after the divorce. But for now, we're less concerned with where it is we're going and more concerned with what it is that brings us there.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - EVENING

Sanjay -- NOW IN HIS EARLY TWENTIES -- sits at an assistant's desk outside of a large EXECUTIVE OFFICE. Three FLOATING TRANSPARENT SCREENS sit before him, each with a different video caller.

SANJAY

(on the phone)
DuVous Publishing. Henri DuVous' office. Please hold.

Across from Sanjay sits the FIRST ASSISTANT. Male. 30's.

SANJAY (CONT'D)

Yes, sir. No. No, that's impossible, I think. Please hold. DuVous Publishing. Henri DuVous' office. Please hold.

SOUND of DING. An Elevator door opens, and from it emerges...

The NARRATOR-- in character. Wearing a loud outfit with large sunglasses.

FIRST ASSISTANT

(to the Narrator)
Good evening. Is there something I can help you with?

NARRATOR

Armando Clementine for Henri.

FIRST ASSISTANT

(who are you?)
I'm sorry. Mr. Duvous's not in.

NARRATOR

Then may I please have the package he left for me?

FIRST ASSISTANT

The... I'm sorry, I don't have a package.

NARRATOR

You don't have a package?

FIRST ASSISTANT
I'm sorry, but-

NARRATOR
Will you take a message for me to
leave Mr. DuVous?

The First Assistant is beginning to suspect that *Mr. Clementine* is important.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
(dictating)
Henri. Never mind the whole thing.
Your assistant insisted you left me
no package. Clearly you don't care
about this transaction...

FIRST ASSISTANT
I'm sorry, Mr....?

NARRATOR
Clementine!

FIRST ASSISTANT
Clementine. Why don't I check down
the hall for that package?

NARRATOR
Why don't you? And why don't you
stay there until you have it,
please?

Sanjay, who's been watching all this with wide eyes,
continues on the phone.

SANJAY
(on the phone)
He's booked that day. What does
September look like?

The first assistant leaves.

The Narrator turns to Sanjay.

NARRATOR
(winking to Sanjay)
Have fun this evening.

Sanjay looks confused but politely waves anyway.

SANJAY
That should be fine, yes, and tell
the Ambassador thank you again.

The Narrator steps onto the elevator just as--

HENRI DUVOUS (50's)-- steps off.

Henri is tall, broad, and powerful. Even through the screen, we can smell the money on him.

HENRI
(pointing toward the empty
desk)
Where is he?

SANJAY
I...?

HENRI
(annoyed)
Nevermind. I'll use you.

Sanjay scurries up and follows DuVous into the office.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Outside the office, we see flying cars and trains zooming past.

HENRI
I need you to make a delivery for
me.

SANJAY
To the normal address?

HENRI
No. To my home. My wife won't be in
for two hours. I want you in and
out before she arrives. Understand?

DuVous hands Sanjay an ENVELOPE and JEWELRY BOX.

SANJAY
Yes, sir.

HENRI
There's a side table on the edge of
our living room. You'll see it from
the entrance. Place the box and the
card out for her there, and then
leave.

SANJAY
Yes, sir.

HENRI
Don't screw this up.

SANJAY
Yes, sir.

HENRI
Sandy?

SANJAY
Sanjay, sir.

HENRI
Do not screw this up, Sanjee.

On Sanjay-- nervous. Nodding.

INT. DUVOUS APARTMENT - DAY

Sanjay unlocks the door and enters.

He looks around the apartment. It's large and open with a classic design.

Sanjay makes his way into the-

LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He places the gift box on the side table, at the edge of the living room, and leans the card against it. Then, he hesitates. He looks around, *no one is home...* he opens the card.

CARD: (Hand written) **Can't make it tonight. So sorry. Brought you something to wear on our next night out together. With regard, H.**

SANJAY
With regard?

Sanjay shakes his head. *Asshole.*

He looks at the box. Opens it. Inside is a DIAMOND NECKLACE.

SOUND of *CLANG* in the distance. Sanjay looks up.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
Hello?

No answer. Sanjay swore he heard-

SOUND of MUSIC.

Someone is in the house.

Sanjay makes his way down the hallway. Still holding the necklace.

A door is open to the...

MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sanjay enters slowly. The music is louder. A FORMAL RED GOWN lies on the bed. Lying flat against the wall with no visible turn-table, a SINGLE RECORD SPINS.

SOUND of a BLOW DRYER. Sanjay whips his head around--

The door to the bathroom is cracked open, steam wafts out, but through it we see the figure of...

A NAKED WOMAN.

Sanjay, mouth agape, drops the necklace.

He breaths heavy. He looks backward, making sure no one else is here, and then - *he shouldn't* - he looks again. The steam has cleared further, and we see *glimpses* of the woman's hand and hair coming into view. Her neck, her hip.

CLOSE ON: The woman's lips, her eyes, her neck, her hair.

He watches as she slips on her lingerie and moves out of frame.

Sanjay shifts his position, trying to find her, when suddenly:

THE DOOR OPENS.

Sanjay freezes.

The woman stands at the door... but she isn't looking at Sanjay. She stares at herself in the mirror. A look of: *Who am I?*

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

We see the woman fully now, CLAIRE DUVOUS (50's). Elegant, sad, lonesome. She stares at herself. *How did I get here?*

She turns to her room and halts. We stay on her. She looks surprised. She squints her eyes looking at...

A NECKLACE on the ground...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sanjay makes his way quickly through the living room. He puts the card back in the envelope and the necklace... *the necklace!* He looks up.

The music starts again.

Sanjay looks desperately for the necklace. He's on all fours. Searching, searching...

CLAIRE (O.C.)

Hello.

Sanjay looks up. Claire, wearing the red dress now, stands at the edge of the living room.

Rising:

SANJAY

Ma'am. I'm- I'm so sorry. I didn't know... I was told no one was home!

CLAIRE

Oh, well then... by all means.

SANJAY

I'm sorry, no... My name's-

CLAIRE

Sandy... yes?

SANJAY

Sanjay.

CLAIRE

Sanjay. Of course. You're the new errand boy for my husband.

SANJAY

I... I'm his executive assist-

CLAIRE

Executive assistant. Yes. He speaks highly of you.

Claire makes her way across the living room toward the bar.

SANJAY

Oh. And you as well. I'm sorry if I scared you.

CLAIRE

You didn't, and *he* doesn't. Though that was nice of you.

SANJAY

I'm sorry?

CLAIRE

My husband has not said a nice thing about me - to you, or anyone - in years. But, it's nice of you to lie.

SANJAY

I wasn't-

Turning to him.

CLAIRE
 What's more interesting is whether
 or not *I* was lying.

SANJAY
 Whether you were...?

CLAIRE
 Lying. Does he *really* speak highly
 of you?

SANJAY
 I-

CLAIRE
 He's very particular about his
 errand boys. You're his third in
 two years.

She pours a drink.

SANJAY
 Executive assist-

CLAIRE
 And you already know I know your
 name, or at least I know what *he*
 thinks your name is, so it's clear
 he's *talked* about you... the
 question is... when he does... is
 it kind?
 (letting that question
 linger, then:)
 What do you drink?

SANJAY
 What do I think?

CLAIRE
 What do you *drink*. Drink, darling.

SANJAY
 Oh... I'm just here-

CLAIRE
 You're just here to deliver a card
 that says my husband has to cancel
 our plans tonight. And, I'm sure, a
gift... as a token of just how
 easily he seems to think my
 emotions can be bought and sold.
 No?

SANJAY
 I'm not sure exactly.

CLAIRE
 Aren't you?

She smiles, like a cat delightedly playing with her mouse.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
What were you doing on the floor
just then?

SANJAY
I dropped...

CLAIRE
Yes?

SANJAY
...my watch.

CLAIRE
Sanjay, you've told me enough lies
tonight. Let's see if we can't get
some truth out of you.

SANJAY
I'm really-

CLAIRE
What did you drop on the ground?

SANJAY
A necklace.

CLAIRE
And what does the card say?

SANJAY
Mr. DuVous has to cancel your plans
tonight.

Claire knew of course, but can't help but feel the sting of hearing it out loud. She sighs. Then, forcing herself back into character asks:

CLAIRE
What do you drink, Sanjay?

SANJAY
Ma'am-

CLAIRE
Sanjay.

SANJAY
Mr. DuVous-

CLAIRE
-isn't here. I am. And, I'm in a
dress. And, my hair is done. And,
I'm having a drink.

SANJAY
I don't think he'd appreciate-

CLAIRE
What? You losing my necklace? Or
you spying on me in the shower?

SANJAY
(panicking)
Ma'am, I am so-

She waves his apology away before he can even sputter it out.

She crosses to the couch, half the distance to Sanjay, with her drink, a bottle, and a second glass.

CLAIRE
He doesn't like you. He thinks
you're an idiot who needs help
tying his shoes.
(looking at him)
I only mention it because he's
going to fire you eventually. He
thinks other peoples' sadness is a
measure of his worth. So really,
what does it matter whether you get
fired for losing the gift, or
spying on his wife, or spending the
night with her?

Sanjay opens his mouth to respond, but...

Spending the night with her?

She holds out the necklace.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
I won't tell him that I caught you.
He'll spend the rest of his life
thinking all of this went
perfectly. He'll be very pleased
with you, I promise. I'll even say
how nicely it was set out.

Sanjay looks relieved.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
But...
(she pats the seat next to
her)
...have a drink with me and talk a
while.

Sanjay concedes, moving toward the couch.

She nods. Content.

She pours him a drink.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Now tell me... Are you a romantic, Sanjay?

SANJAY

I'm not sure.

CLAIRE

No?

SANJAY

No.

CLAIRE

Well, let's find out. Do you find women mysterious?

SANJAY

Right now I do.

CLAIRE

And, do you find them magical?

Sanjay stares at her.

SANJAY

Yes.

CLAIRE

When you're with a woman, do you think of her pleasure or yours?

SANJAY

I guess... I guess I think you need both to have either.

Claire nods. Intrigued.

CLAIRE

Do you have a girlfriend, Sanjay?

SANJAY

No.

CLAIRE

Why not? You're handsome. Why not a girlfriend?

SANJAY

You're asking the wrong person.

CLAIRE

Unrequited love?

SANJAY

If it's possible to love someone who doesn't care about you, then yes.

CLAIRE
That *is* the question. What do you think?

SANJAY
I don't know. Are you in love with your husband?

Claire stares at him. Surprised by his sudden confidence. We see her vulnerable. Honest.

CLAIRE
No.

SANJAY
Were you ever in love?

CLAIRE
With him? I don't know. I don't think so.

SANJAY
But with someone?

CLAIRE
Yes. And he loved me.

SANJAY
What was that like?

CLAIRE
(dreamily, to herself)
Like flying.

Claire's lost in a memory. She turns to Sanjay and moves closer toward him.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
My advice, Sanjay?

She looks at him like this is the most important information in the world.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Find someone you can't live without, make love for days, and then jump off a bridge.

And then, she kisses him.

They fall onto the couch as:

The camera floats out of the window...

...and La Ronde continues.

The CAMERA continues out the window and TILTS DOWN to the...

EXT. STREET - DAY

But it's a different time. A different place. In the distance, SOUND of SIRENS approaching.

CARD: CLAIRE and ANTOINE - APRIL, 1930 - NICE, FRANCE

ULTIMATE DATE: MAY, 456 AT

POLICE CARS come hurling into frame.

STREET - MOMENTS LATER

One officer, decorated, clearly in charge, forcefully gives orders to his LIEUTENANTS. And then, we notice who it is...

Our Narrator, dressed in a CAPTAINS UNIFORM.

THIS SEQUENCE IS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN FRENCH

NARRATOR

(in French)

I want a perimeter set up for eight blocks in every direction.

(to a Sergeant)

Have your men canvas the area.

(to one officer in particular)

You! Come here.

ANTOINE, 20's, a rather dopey looking officer, scurries over.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Go in the building and get statements from all the neighbors. Start with apartment six.

ANTOINE

Apartment six? That's in the middle of the-

NARRATOR

Did I ask you for advice, officer?

ANTOINE

No, sir!

NARRATOR

Then what are you waiting for?

ANTOINE

Yes, sir!

Antoine turns and starts toward the apartment building.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

SOUND of BUZZ BUZZ.

Claire lies on her couch reading a book. She's younger now. Maybe 25. She moves to get the door, but can't tear her eyes away from the page.

SOUND of BUZZ BUZZ.

Finally, she goes to the door and opens it.

There, she finds Antoine, who takes one look at her and immediately falls head over heels, once in a lifetime, in love.

He removes his cap like a nervous child.

ANTOINE

Bonjour.

CLAIRE

Bonjour.

Antoine tries to shake some sense into himself.

ANTOINE

(in French)

Uuummm... There was a robbery...
Across the hall.

Claire nods along.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

It was about thirty minutes ago.
Did you see anything suspicious?

Claire nods again.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

You did?! Oh Fantastic! Um... may I
come in?

Claire, responding to his gestures, moves out of his way and let's him into the apartment.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

I've never actually interviewed a
witness. They normally give me the
most useless jobs because they
think I'm useless.

He laughs. She laughs, too.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)

Um, so...
(noticing her book)
(MORE)

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 Oh. Virginia Woolfe. Beautiful. So
 sad, and true, and wonderful.

Claire nods.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 I was in a performance of this in
 University. I studied theater. I
 wanted to work on the stage.
 (acting)
 "and she muttered, dreamily half
 asleep, how we perish, each alone."

Claire smiles politely.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 And, you're reading it in English?
 Good for you! You speak English?

CLAIRE
 Oui.

ANTOINE
 Oui.
 (speaking in English now)
 Yes! Today it is hot. And so must
 put powder on my body!

Antoine looks at her, proud of himself.

Claire fights from laughing at him.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 (back to French)
 You have a beautiful apartment.
 Large windows. It's so important
 being able to see sunlight in your
 home, don't you think?

Claire smiles. Nods.

Antoine looks through all of her bookshelves.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 It's probably nice having the
 natural light for reading all these
 books.

Claire doesn't answer. Antoine turns to her.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 Yeah?

CLAIRE
 Oh. Yes.

Antoine smiles.

ANTOINE
Umm. So. About the criminal you
saw...

(hesitates)
Do you have tea?

CLAIRE
Tea?

ANTOINE
Yes.

Claire nods.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Claire and Antoine sit down for tea.

ANTOINE
Merci.
(continues in French)
So, describe for me exactly what
you saw.

Claire nods.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
Whenever you're ready.

Claire shrugs.

Antoine suddenly understands.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
Oh- do you- do you not speak any
French?

CLAIRE
Oui. Er... no.

ANTOINE
But, did you- did you see the
criminal?

Claire shrugs.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
Did you see...

He points to her, points to his eyes like "see", then thinks.

Antoine, desperate now, stands up. He tip-toes like a cartoon
burglar and pantomimes nipping something and dropping it in
his bag.

Claire smiles like he's crazy, but finds it charming.

Antoine, smiling, sinks with frustration. Then, *an idea*.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
One minute. One minute. Ah...
(in English)
What you name?

CLAIRE
Claire.

ANTOINE
(in English)
Ah. Claire. One minute, Claire.

CLAIRE
Okay.

Antoine goes to the front window, opens it, and whistles.

ANTOINE
Hey! Gerard! Come up here! Yes,
come up here!

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Antoine meets his partner, GERARD, in the hallway. Gerard is a squat, very by the book kind of officer. Socially, he has the dynamic range of a metronome.

ANTOINE
Gerard, you speak English don't
you?

GERARD
Yes, I speak English quite well.
Although, I should say I haven't
yet been approved for legal
translation-

ANTOINE
No, no, that's fine.

They enter the...

APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
(in English)
Claire. My police friend. Gerard.
He translate.

Gerard translates Antoine's French into English.

GERARD
(in English)
I heard your name is Claire.
(MORE)

GERARD (CONT'D)
You just heard my name is Gerard.
It is very nice to meet you.

CLAIRE
Nice to meet you, Gerard.

ANTOINE
Yes, yes. Now...
(acting official)
Please describe exactly what you
saw for us, Claire.

GERARD
Can you describe what you
witnessed?

CLAIRE
Oh. I'm sorry. I didn't see
anything.

GERARD
She didn't see anything.

ANTOINE
She? You?

He pantomimes the burglar again.

CLAIRE
I'm not sure what that is.

GERARD
Neither am I.
(to Antoine)
Neither of us know what you are
doing there.

ANTOINE
(to Gerard)
Of course you know what I'm doing,
I'm describing the crime!

CLAIRE
I'm sorry if there was any
confusion; I must have
misunderstood.

GERARD
(to Antoine)
She didn't see anything. She
doesn't know why we're here.
(to Claire)
Sorry to have bothered you ma'am.

ANTOINE
No, no, no. I have more questions.

GERARD
What questions-

ANTOINE
Just... ask!
(to Claire)
Claire, do you live alone here?

GERARD
Do you live here alone?

CLAIRE
No. This is my aunt's flat. I'm
only visiting.

GERARD
She's visiting her aunt.

ANTOINE
Ah. And... do you have a boyfriend?

GERARD
Do you have a-
(turning to Antoine- in
French
Why do you want to know-

Antoine hits him.

GERARD (CONT'D)
Do you have a boyfriend?

Claire smiles at Antoine.

CLAIRE
No.

GERARD
She said-

ANTOINE
Have you ever experienced love at
first sight?

Gerard looks at him like he's crazy.

GERARD
He asks, "Have you ever felt love
at first sight?"

Claire can't believe this.

CLAIRE
I can't say... I've never
experienced it myself.

GERARD
She doesn't know.

ANTOINE

I have. It's like flying in a dream. The type of love that makes you want to ask every question and have every conversation until there are no words left unsaid, and all there is left to do is jump off a bridge together.

Claire stares at him.

After a moment...

GERARD

(to Antoine)

Why would you jump off a bridge?

Antoine doesn't answer. He takes a card out of his pocket and hands it to Claire.

ANTOINE

(to Claire)

If you remember...

And then pantomimes the burglary again.

She giggles. Antoine smiles, proud of himself for making her laugh.

He nods his head and leads Gerard toward the door.

GERARD

I don't think she understands that gesture. If you'd like to *describe* it to me...

ANTOINE

It's okay, Gerard.

They get to the door. Claire panics. She can't let him go...

Gerard exits through the door, and Antoine follows close behind. But, just before Antoine pulls the door completely closes--

Claire reaches through the frame and pulls him back in. And they kiss.

There's a sudden uproar of cheering, as a CURTAIN FALLS OVER FRAME, bringing us to the...

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

OVER THE CURTAIN:

CARD: ANTOINE and ROLAND - JUNE, 1890 - NICE, FRANCE

ULTIMATE DATE - JUNE, 448

Actors scurry in front of us, positioning themselves for their curtain call.

The camera drifts toward the left wing where we find the Narrator.

NARRATOR

Of course, Antoine would later have his heart broken, as Claire chose over him a wealthy publisher from the future named Henri. But, he wasn't destroyed by it. In fact, he considered it his debt to the scales of love, because although it did break his heart, he understood love as he understood the theater, the curtain comes up, the curtain comes down, and if you're lucky there's a call, where the energy of a performance still exists after the players break character, and for a moment everyone together can say, that was beautiful. That was fun.

HARD CUT TO:

****THIS SEQUENCE, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, IS SPOKEN IN FRENCH****

Antoine, on stage, bowing. The crowd erupts. He takes another bow, devouring his adoration. The curtain is drawn. He takes a deep breath. It opens again. He takes a third bow.

And then, in the theater, he sees someone. He's taken aback.

Could it be?

His eyes are forced back to the crowd, and now he's acting again, performing the role of an actor, basking in the applause of his admirers, but his eyes keep glancing toward one person, and we can sense a fluttering heart.

BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

Backstage is crowded. Behind the curtain, Antoine makes his way from one wing to the other. He's moving toward someone off screen. People stop him, congratulate him, compliment his performance.

CREW MEMBER

Bravo, Antoine! Well done.

ANTOINE

Thank you so much.

CAST MEMBER
Great show.

ANTOINE
Great show!

He's polite in thanking each of them, but is all the while inching forward, keeping his eye on that one person off screen. He makes his way toward the other end of the stage...

And then he arrives. The camera pans as he takes the last steps toward his destination, and entering frame is the object of his focus...

ROLAND (30's) is a notably thin trans man wearing a three piece suit, and carries himself as one who is - at most times - confident, but is in this moment nervous and meek.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
Hello.

ROLAND
Hello, Antoine.

They stare at each other. There's clearly an unresolved romantic history.

ANTOINE
How did you-

ROLAND
Gabby told me.

ANTOINE
Ah.

Another cast member runs up.

CAST MEMBER
Roland!

ROLAND
Jackie.

CAST MEMBER
What a surprise! Are you coming to the party?

ROLAND
I can't stay long.

CAST MEMBER
I heard you were commissioned for a play in Paris.

ROLAND
I was!

CAST MEMBER
 Well, that's incredible! It's nice
 to see you. Come to the party!
 (to Antoine)
 Good job, An!

The cast member leaves.

Antoine gives Roland an impressed look:

ANTOINE
 Commissioned?

Roland rolls his eyes. *I don't know.*

Antoine smiles.

The subtext is heavy. Steamy. Without breaking eye contact,
 without even blinking:

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 I have to change...

ROLAND
 Yeah.

ANTOINE
 Do you...?

ROLAND
 Yeah.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The door bursts open. First in is Roland, seemingly pushed by
 Antoine. The door slams. They kiss passionately. Roland goes
 for Antoine's belt buckle. Loosens it. Unfastens the top
 button of Antoine's pants and pulls them down as we-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A Champagne bottle. *POP!*

Yaaay! People cheer. They talk. The champagne is passed
 around.

It's a cast and crew party. They sit around a long table.
 Antoine next to Roland.

CAST MEMBER 1
 (in English)
 Are you writing your play in
 English or French, Ro?

ROLAND
 (in English)
 In English, of course.

That gets a big reaction. Some people cheer; some people groan.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
 (to Antoine back in
 french)
 They were asking me if I was going
 to write my play in English, or in
 French-

ANTOINE
 Oui, oui. And you told them French,
 of course!

People laugh.

ROLAND
 (to the crowd)
 I can't tell him. I can't! It will
 break his heart!

Antoine smiles.

CAST MEMBER 2
 What's the story?

ROLAND
 Well, I can't be sure, but probably
 sex, and sexuality, and...

CAST MEMBER 3
 Sex, and sex, and sex...

They laugh.

CAST MEMBER 2
 Well, if you decide to write in
 French, and you're looking for an
 actor to write for... You've seen
 my work.

ROLAND
 I'll keep that in mind. But after
 tonight's performance I'm thinking
 I'll maybe write something for
 Antoine.

Antoine doesn't like that.

CAST MEMBER 1
 Ah, of course, Antoine!

CAST MEMBER 3
 Writers looove Antoine.

ANTOINE
 Ah, well. Too bad. I'm off to the
 Police Academy. Excuse me.

Antoine stands and heads toward the bar.

CAST MEMBER 2
 See there you go! So maybe write
 for me!

Roland laughs, but gives Antoine a sideways glance.

BAR - LATER

At the table, Roland fake listens to a conversation while
 glancing at the bar where...

...a WOMAN approaches Antoine. He's affectionate with her.
 Roland pretends he doesn't care.

Antoine grabs her hip and pulls her toward him.

Roland, unable to hide from us his frustration, forces
 himself to look away...

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

Carriages clop along the street. Antoine helps a friend into
 one as he kisses her on the cheek.

FRIEND
 You were brilliant tonight! We're
 going to miss you next year!

ANTOINE
 I love you. I'll see you soon!

Antoine watches as the carriage pulls away. He turns around.
 Roland is on the street, too.

ANTOINE (CONT'D)
 Thank you for coming tonight.

ROLAND
 I was serious, you know.

ANTOINE
 About what?

ROLAND
 You know about what.

Antoine does.

ANTOINE
 I'm not going to be an actor.

ROLAND
You are an actor!

ANTOINE
I mean, I'm never going to be an actor! I'd never make it.

ROLAND
If I wrote a part for you though-

ANTOINE
Do you know how patronizing that is?

ROLAND
An.

ANTOINE
You saying in front of everyone that you would do me this great favor?

ROLAND
An!

ANTOINE
Which - let's be clear - it *would* be an incredible favor. I mean, you are infinitely more talented than I am, so it would be a huge favor. But to say in front of everyone that you would do that for me... That's embarrassing.

ROLAND
We made a plan.

ANTOINE
We had a dream.

ROLAND
We made a plan.

ANTOINE
We had a dream. We had a *day* dream! A *daydream*. Something to think about to pass time while we were bored, but nothing that was meant to be taken seriously. We've had this conversation, Roland!

ROLAND
While we were bored?

ANTOINE
Why did you come here tonight?

ROLAND
I wanted to see you.

ANTOINE
Because you wanted to see me, or
because you wanted to begin your
life with me?

ROLAND
I don't understand how you could
just sleep with me tonight-

ANTOINE
Because you showed up! You came
back stage! You looked at me the
way you look at me. I didn't think
I was agreeing to a whole *life*-

ROLAND
Why would you pass on this
opportunity...

ANTOINE
Because I'd be using you! Is that
what you'd want? For me to use you?

ROLAND
I don't know why you put it that
way.

ANTOINE
Because that's what it would be! We
were a fling. God. We've had this
conversation. We were a fling.

ROLAND
It was more than that to me.

ANTOINE
And yet, it takes two people to
define a relationship. Which is
exactly what we talked about.

ROLAND
I love you.

Antoine fumes. Quietly:

ANTOINE
You love me, only to the extent a
person can love someone who will
never love them back.

Silence.

Roland. Heartbroken. Mad.

A voice from off screen appears:

WOMAN (O.S.)
Antoine!

Antoine turns. He holds up a finger. *One minute.*

ANTOINE
I'm sorry to be so blunt, but we've talked about this... When you came here tonight- I...
(*God, isn't it obvious*)
I'm attracted to you, Roland.
Obviously! But I don't...

WOMAN (O.S.)
An, come in here!

Antoine doesn't know what to do...

ANTOINE
I'm sorry...

He walks away...

We stay on Roland. Alone. Flabbergasted. *What just happened?*

He walks down the street. His whole life, poor fool, just collapsed on him...

A carriage pulls up...

CARRIAGE DRIVER
You need a cab?

Roland shakes him off... he walks away.

Roland, still putting the pieces of his rejection back together, turns a corner.

The carriage pulls up again...

Roland looks at the carriage driver.

It's our Narrator.

Roland thinks... *I guess I do need a ride.*

He nods.

INT. CARRIAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Roland, still baffled, sits in the moving carriage. He turns his head toward the window as some enormous wave of melodrama seems to wash over him.

THUNDER CRASHES. And our frame SNAPS TO:

BLACK AND WHITE FOOTAGE. 4:3 ASPECT RATIO.

Rain begins tapping lightly against the carriage window. as Roland rests his forehead against it; shadows of water streak against his face.

IN ENGLISH NOW

ROLAND

What purpose is there to mourn a love that was not merely missed, but, as now I know, never existed at all? What necessity, for a species that has walked on planets and traveled through time, do the haunting notes of heartbreak serve?

ANGLE ON: The Narrator, back in color, back in wide screen, to us:

NARRATOR

He'll go on like this for hours; and, I can assure you, it's really quite unbearable...

ROLAND

-trapped inside a space smaller than my form. I am absolute despair.

NARRATOR

And truthfully, this is where we leave Roland. We'll be following him into the past, so where he goes from here does not affect La Ronde. But, before we do, if we can forgive him of his melodrama, he says something, I think, worth noting.

BEAT. Something occurring to Roland.

ROLAND

There is a romance, I suppose, in wallowing... In sadness. In heartache, and melancholy. It provides for us brief measures of time in which we are able to sense the true dynamic range of life. Happiness and pleasure are narrow lanes that blind us to life's vastness. So, I suppose there is that. I suppose there is something redeeming to that.

The Narrator looks at us, nods, then turns back to Roland:

NARRATOR

Where are you going?

ROLAND
I'm sorry?

INT. TAXI - NIGHT

Narrator, driving a cab and turning toward...

Roland.... Except it isn't Roland. Not Yet. It's Roland before he became Roland. It's Roland as a young woman. It's Nona (20) holding the paper with movie times.

NARRATOR
Where are you going?

NONA
I'm going to The Biograph. You took me to the Music Box.

NARRATOR
(to us, with a wink)
Oh no...

NONA
I just, I wasn't paying attention.

NARRATOR
I'm sorry, but I'm done for the night.

NONA
What?

NARRATOR
I'm done for the night. You'll have to catch another cab. Or see something here.

NONA
No! Come on, really?

EXT. CHICAGO STREET - NIGHT

Outside the MUSIC BOX theater, Nona stands as the taxi pulls away.

CARD: NONA and ELOISE - AUGUST, 1960 - CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

ULTIMATE DATE: JUNE, 440 AT

Nona, trying to hail a cab.

NONA
Taxi! Taxi!

No luck. Then, she sees ELOISE (18) crossing the street. It isn't an 'oh my god', love-at-first-sight moment. It's just a vague interest.

Nona goes to look for another cab. One is coming toward her, but she hesitates. She looks at the --

KIOSK: HOWARD HAWKS MARATHON

She sees Eloise buying a ticket.

Nona thinks.

EXT. THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

Nona stands in line. She looks at a movie poster. It's GEORGE CLOONEY holding a gun on a street corner. The text says: *George Clooney in '11th Avenue' Directed by Howard Hawks. His first film after time travel.*

Nona looks into the theater lobby.

There are a lot of people outside of '11th Avenue', but Eloise walks into a different theater. The theater playing... Nona can't see.

TICKET SALSMEN
One for '11th Avenue'?

NONA
No. What else is playing?

TICKET SALSMEN
His Girl Friday?

NONA
Okay. Yeah.

FULL SCREEN: THEATER SCREEN

We see the flickering projection of the opening credits to 'His Girl Friday'.

Nona walks in with popcorn and a soda.

Only Eloise is in the theater.

Nona takes more notice of her now. There's something interesting about Eloise. She has a certain confidence... like someone frustrated by the world not being as smart as her.

Nona sits a few rows back.

Eloise watches the movie. Nona watches Eloise.

THEATER - LATER

Nona is still watching Eloise. She's compelled. Building courage, Nona stands up and walks toward her.

NONA
Excuse me?

Eloise turns.

NONA (CONT'D)
Are you from the future?

ELOISE
What?

NONA
Are you from the future?

She looks around.

ELOISE
We're in a movie theater.

NONA
I know.

ELOISE
So, you shouldn't talk in a movie theater. You might distract some of the other customers.

Nona looks around.

NONA
We're the only ones here.

ELOISE
Well then, you're distracting *all* of the other customers.

Nona smiles.

NONA
You watch movies like you're from the twentieth century.

Eloise squints her eyes. She shouldn't condone this, but it's an interesting thing to hear...

ELOISE
How do people from the twentieth century watch movies?

NONA
They devour them.
(beat)
Every time has their own art form.
(MORE)

NONA (CONT'D)
 Painting. Symphony. Theater. Film.
 Video Games. VR. Whatever it is
 people from the far future do.

ELOISE
 I'm from the twenty-third century.

NONA
 So, you know. What art form is from
 then?

ELOISE
 I don't know. I like movies.

Nona smiles.

NONA
 I'm Nona.

Eloise gives a look of charmed suspicion.

ELOISE
 I'm Eloise.

Nona smiles like, *well alright then.*

They both turn to the screen.

ELOISE (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
I study film...

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT

Eloise and Nona walk down the street.

ELOISE
 ...First generation filmmakers
 inside the new timeline.

NONA
 So, like Howard Hawks after time
 travel?

ELOISE
 Exactly. Although, he isn't that
 interesting.

NONA
 I like his post time travel movies:
 "Swiss Army Knife", "Twelve Feet
 Deep", "11th Avenue"

ELOISE
 Those are the only ones anyone ever
 brings up, and they weren't new.
 (MORE)

ELOISE (CONT'D)

They were still just star-studded studio movies, only now in part made by computers.

NONA

Who do you like then?

ELOISE

Max Ophuls. Guys like that. Filmmakers who could embrace technologies from the future and innovate something new. Or Welles, obviously. Guys who had interesting things to say about that generation.

NONA

None of Welles' theories about the horrors of time travel were true, though. He got everything wrong.

ELOISE

But, it reflects a certain fear that existed in that time. His films work as historical documents. They're constantly cited in books about the era.

NONA

Oh-ho boy, you are from the future.

ELOISE

What does that mean?

NONA

People from the future have this air about them. This need to explain things to everyone else.

ELOISE

Oh, really? Are you sure that's my future arrogance, or are you just sensitive because of your-

NONA

Doon't!

ELOISE

-because of your twentieth-century pride?

NONA

People from the twentieth-century are not proud.

ELOISE

Yes, you are! You think your Original History was the greatest century of all time.

NONA
I mean...

Nona shrugs like, *it kind of is, right?*

ELOISE
You see!

NONA
We went from carts and buggies to space travel. From telegrams to video conferences.

ELOISE
Yeeeaahh, and you went from muskets to atom bombs. You almost killed the planet in like nine different ways, and you created oppressive social policies that would lock entire nations into poverty for hundreds of years or, more precisely, until the great social revolution of the twenty-third century. Thank you very much.

NONA
Yeah, well... we also had Max Ophuls and Orson Welles.

Eloise smiles.

ELOISE
Yeah, well... I'll give you that.

They continue walking.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

They continue on a different street. It's later. Quieter.

ELOISE
Suandella.

NONA
(*where have I heard that*)
Suandella?

ELOISE
Yeah. That's the art form people are really into. At least kids my age. In the twenty-third century.

NONA
Right. I've heard of that. It's like...

ELOISE

It's like... you basically create these movements that correlate to a sound, and people record themselves with holographic tech, and create melodies with their bodies.

NONA

Yeeeah. I've seen that.

ELOISE

Yeah, so it'll be like...

She moves her arms around her body and sings a note.

NONA

And then...

She does a little glide step and sings a different note higher.

ELOISE

Then when you do them at the same time it's like...

She does both moves simultaneously and sings a third note.

NONA

Right.

ELOISE

It's cool.

NONA

It's weird. I mean not, like, weird-

ELOISE

Yeah-

NONA

Like interesting.

ELOISE

Yeah.

They lay down on the grass.

ELOSIE

What's your thing?

NONA

I'm a writer.

ELOISE

Books or film or...

NONA

Theater. I'm a playwright.

ELOISE
Huh. What drew you to that?

NONA
(beat, realizing it sounds
stupid)
The smell.

ELOISE
(laughing)
The smell?!

NONA
Yeah. I know, but it's like... in
film, you know, everything is
polished. Everything is perfect.
But in the theater, it's happening
there. In the room. And you can
smell the stage, and the paint, and
the actors. It's right there. It's
really happening. And, there's just
this energy... I had to be a part
of it.

ELOISE
Is there a lot of theater here?

NONA
Um... yeah. It was really big
during Original History's twentieth
century, but right now it's mostly
late 1800's. That's where the best
theater is happening. That's when I
go to school.

ELOISE
Yeah?

NONA
Yeah. In France.

ELOISE
Huh.

NONA
What?

ELOISE
Just, here I am. From the twenty-
third century in the twentieth. And
here you are, from the twentieth
century, studying in the
nineteenth. I just... I wonder what
that is. People being drawn toward
times that aren't there own?

NONA
Yeah.

ELOISE
I guess it's just, you like what you like. And, you look for places that foster those things. Whatever makes you happy.

NONA
Yeah... happy.

Nona sighs. She's not content with just "happy". She lies back, looking up toward the sky.

Eloise watches her.

NONA (CONT'D)
It's not just happy, it's...
(frustrated, she can't
find the words)
I think we all want very badly to understand ourselves. Like, we're born with an identity, and we spend our lives trying to make sense of it.

Nona thinks. Eloise watches. We watch Eloise watching Nona...

NONA (CONT'D)
And the way we do that is through connections like this one.. with people we feel connected to, and feel ourselves, for whatever reason, being authentic with. You know? Totally real, without pretention. And I think times, and I think places, they have character. They have personality. And so, the way we feel drawn toward people we have connections with, we're also drawn toward times we feel ourselves in. I think *that's* what makes us happy. And I think *that's* why happiness is important... because it helps us to know ourselves.

Eloise lies next to Nona. They're face to face.

ELOISE
When do you travel back in time?

NONA
A few days.

Eloise nods.

ELOISE
Do you want to see a film I made?

Nona smiles. Nods.

EXT. STREET - DAWN

Nona and Eloise stop in front of an apartment building. Eloise takes out her keys. Unlocks the front door.

INT. ELOISE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

A string of small lanterns illuminate Eloise's small bohemian attic apartment.

She has posters of great films on her wall. Some of them we recognize: BREATHLESS, THE 400 BLOWS, TOKYO STORY, VERTIGO. Some of them we don't: THE SHOTGUN BIBLE by Richard Linklater, CAROLINA CAROLINE by Francois Truffaut.

Purple dawn light hugs her small window.

ELOISE
This isn't anything special.

NONA
Okay.

ELOISE
I just had some film and a camera and shot. Nothing's been edited.

NONA
Yeah.

Eloise loads a reel of film into her projector.

ON SCREEN: flares of lights and colors and then...

A MAN. Dancing.

Eloise and Nona watch the film from her small couch.

NONA (CONT'D)
This is beautiful.

Eloise turns to look at her. There is a moment... Eloise knows better than to let it pass. She's made that mistake before... She goes to kiss Nona as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BOARDING SCHOOL - DAY

We're outside of an old BOARDING SCHOOL. At first, it looks like we're in the past; but then a HOVERING TRAM crosses frame.

CARD: ELOISE and HARVEY - MAY, 2219, KYOTO, JAPAN

ULTIMATE DATE: FEBRUARY, 439 AT

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY

We're in a small lecture hall. On a floating screen, we see silent video clips OF THREE DIFFERENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S at three different ages. All meeting each other.

TEACHER

Because of the overlapping dimensions that time travel created, it wasn't uncommon for the first generation of time-travelers to meet themselves at different ages. Now, as you should know from your physics courses, we're not able to meet earlier versions of ourselves, just as we're not able to meet any of these historical figures.

In the lecture hall, we find HARVEY (17) finishing a note on what looks like a scrap of paper. He folds the four corner toward the center and stamps his finger where they all meet in the center. The loosely folded note tightens as though glued shut by magic.

He writes "Eloise" on the front, waits for the teacher to look away and, resting the note in his palm, gently tosses it into the air.

The note floats through the room...

TEACHER (CONT'D)

So, someone who was, say, seventeen when time travel had been invented, and decided to travel twenty years into the future, that person could, in theory, meet their future self. They could see who their future self had become. They could see who their future self had married, and as such, who *they* would have married had their timeline continued without disruption. But of course, their timeline *was* disrupted. The invention of time travel disrupted everyone's timeline during the original generation.

We follow the note, until it lands on the desk of:

ELOISE (17). The camera tilts up onto her as her glance pivots from the note to the sender across the room.

Harvey crosses his eyes and sticks his tongue out.

Eloise holds back a laugh.

TIGHT ON: THE NOTE.

In changing color ink, the note says: "Eloise". And just beneath that: PASSWORD.

She swipes her thumb across the word PASSWORD and a blank space appears. She writes: PASSWORD.

And the note, just as quickly as it seemed to glue itself shut, loosens back to its original hand-folding.

She opens the note. Drawn there is a little animation of two people watching a movie.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

The events that took place between the ages of seventeen and thirty-seven during that person's future self's life, might not, or rather more likely *would* not, take place during *their* life. Because in the thirty-seven year old's timeline, time travel had not existed when *they* were seventeen.

Eloise smiles. She turns the note over, and writes "!!!!". She tosses the note to Harvey. It floats in his direction but, before it arrives, it's captured in mid-air by the teacher.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Harvey! Explain to everyone the principles of timeline compression that prevented paradoxes during the original generation of time travel.

HARVEY

Yes. Um. Something. Something with the ultimate timeline!

TEACHER

Something. Anything specific?

HARVEY

Probably.

The teacher whacks Harvey on the head with the note.

TEACHER

Pay attention.

INT. MALL - LATER

Harvey and Eloise walk through a department store in the mall.

HARVEY

When will I ever need to know that?

ELOISE
People time travel every day.

HARVEY
People walk around every day. It
doesn't mean they know how muscles
and bones work.

Eloise looks at a dress.

ELOISE
What do you think of this?

HARVEY
(desperate to leave)
It's wonderful. Truly. Let's go.

ELOISE
Would you relax?

Harvey sighs. Bored. He hates being here.

HARVEY
What is it about malls that's so
sad?

ELOISE
It's feeling alone while being
surrounded by other people.

Harvey, thinking.

HARVEY
God, that is it. I thought we'd
talk about this for ten minutes,
but you said it just like that. The
whole conversation is over.

ELOISE
How 'bout this?

HARVEY
Can we go, please?

ELOISE
I need clothes for the twentieth
century!

HARVEY
What's wrong with the clothes you
have?

ELOISE
They don't wear this in the
twentieth century.

HARVEY
But they are allowed to, yes? They
don't still have those fascists
Naza regimes where they dictate
what people wear and think and
believe, do they?

ELOISE
Naza?

HARVEY
Yeah.

ELOISE
Nazi!

HARVEY
Zi?

ELOISE
Yeah.

HARVEY
Not Za?

ELOISE
Not Za.

HARVEY
That's what I said. Naza!

ELOISE
Oh my god. I hate you.

HARVEY
Who was that? Hitzler?

ELOISE
Let's go.

INT. MOVIE LIBRARY - LATER

This place is Eloise's dream. A library with just about every
reel of film you can imagine. She and Harvey walk through the
aisles looking through the titles. She prompts him to do
parodies of her favorite genres.

ELOISE
Italian.

HARVEY
Mia Bella! Donde mia bicceclata!?

ELOISE
Ha! French.

Harvey fakes smoking a cigarette. Very serious.

HARVEY
 Jui le qua? Moi swey? No. No Moi
 Swey!

ELOISE
 German.

Harvey goes to start but halts.

HARVEY
 Hm. We don't really watch enough
 German movies; I don't know how to
 make fun of those.

ELOISE
 Okay. Ummm... Western.

HARVEY
 (fake holding a gun)
 Now look... I'm not leavin' here
 without the girl, so we can do this
 the hard way...
 (fake holding a second
 gun)
 ...or the harder way.

Eloise loves it.

Harvey smiles.

INT. ELOISE'S ROOM - NIGHT

FULL SCREEN: PROJECTOR SCREEN.

Francois Truffaut plays a filmmaker working with his film's
 star played by Marion Cotillard.

Eloise is lying on the couch. Harvey is sitting.

Eloise is falling asleep. Harvey watches her.

He reaches out, about to brush her hair... but stops. He
 thinks about it. Brings his hand back.

CLOSE ON: Eloise. Her eyes open. She takes a deep breath.
 Disappointed?

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Eloise walks through an empty hallway. We hear what sounds
 like a dance studio.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The class is doing Suandella. Their movements create sound and harmonize with each other.

Eloise looks in. She finds...

HARVEY. He isn't great, but he clearly loves it. Eloise is charmed. He notices her. She waves.

He flips her off.

She laughs. Flips him off.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

They're on a floating train. Eloise plays what looks like three dimensional Tetris.

HARVEY

I got you a present.

She wipes her hand over the game and the shapes disappear.

ELOISE

What?

HARVEY

Yeah.

ELOISE

A birthday present?

HARVEY

Uh-huh.

ELOISE

What is it?

HARVEY

What *is* it?! I'm not telling you!

ELOISE

Well, where is it?

HARVEY

Not here.

ELOISE

What!?

HARVEY

It's in my dorm.

ELOISE

Ahhh! Why would you tell me? This is excruciating.

HARVEY
That's why I told you.

ELOISE
What if I'm more excited than I
should be?

HARVEY
You can't be too excited.

ELOISE
I can't be too excited??

HARVEY
It's a really really good gift.

ELOISE
Whaaaat!? What is it?

Harvey shrugs.

Eloise suddenly frowns. Something dawns on her...

ELOISE (CONT'D)
God, I just realized. I'm going to
already be gone by your birthday.

HARVEY
I know, I was thinking about that
too actually.

Eloise looks at him. Harvey nods with an expression of: *Yup. Sucks.*

Eloise nods, too. *Yeah.*

INT. MOVIE LIBRARY - AFTERNOON

At the check out desk, Eloise makes an exchange.

HARVEY
Are you worried about living in the
twentieth century?

ELOISE
(to the librarian)
Returning this. And getting this.
(to Harvey)
No. Why would I be?

HARVEY
I don't know. It's like a whole
different culture in the past.
Aren't men like super aggressive
then? Like whistling at women on
the street and stuff?

ELOISE
Yeah. I guess they're more
assertive in general.

LIBRARIAN
You're all set.

ELOISE
(to librarian)
Thank you.
(then to Harvey with
subtext)
That's not always a bad thing
though.

On Harvey, *Gulp!*

INT. ELOISE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eloise and Harvey sit, a bit awkwardly, watching the movie.

Eloise is under a small blanket. Harvey is not. He rubs his
arms as though cold.

ELOISE
Do you want some blanket?

HARVEY
Oh god, no. Don't worry about me.

He starts chattering his teeth dramatically.

ELOISE
Shut up! Here!

She tosses some of the blanket over Harvey, but it isn't
large enough; it only covers half of him.

HARVEY
Perfect!

She laughs. They both inch closer together in order to share
the blanket. Now they're really close.

They sit like this for a long moment. Both staring at the
screen; neither watching the movie.

Eloise takes one of her arms out of the blanket and places it
over her leg so that it's only inches from Harvey's arm.

Harvey's hand twitches like he's going to take hers, but
suddenly stops. She notices this. She looks disappointed. She
moves her hand toward his but...

...Harvey's already off the couch.

HARVEY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna run to the bathroom real quick.

ELOISE
Okay.

CLOSE ON: ELOISE-- watching Harvey...

He makes it to the door. Stops, shakes his head, turns around, and looks at her. *What are we doing?*

He strides confidently toward her. She stands up.

ELOISE (CONT'D)
Thank god.

She jumps up, her legs around him...

and just before their lips meet --

-- the door closes.

CLOSE ON: ELOISE-- Alone.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON: HARVEY-- splashing water on his face. He looks at himself in the mirror:

HARVEY
What are you doing? She wants this.
She likes you!

He stops. *Enough.*

He strides confidently out of the bathroom into...

ELOISE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He walks straight toward her.

HARVEY
I can't anymore.

As he approaches, Eloise falls onto her back accepting him as he lowers himself above her. He brings his lips toward hers except--

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON: HARVEY-- staring at the closed door. Alone.

INT. ELOISE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Harvey sits back down. They both stare at the screen. Neither watching the film.

INT. DORM COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

It's a party. Eloise is opening presents.

She's just received a "20th century dress".

ELOISE
Ohhh, this is cool!

Harvey watches...

LATER

Some GUY is flirting with Eloise. Some GIRL is flirting with Harvey. They look at each other across the room. Harvey crosses his eyes. She laughs and flips him off...

LATER

Harvey, alone. Looking out the window. From behind him he hears:

ELOISE (CONT'D)
I hope you don't think I forgot
about my gift.

He smiles. Then he puts on a very serious face as he turns to her.

HARVEY
I've been meaning to tell you about
that.

ELOISE
What? What is it?

HARVEY
See. I got into some trouble.

Eloise cracks an understanding smile. She plays along.

ELOISE
Oh, no!

HARVEY
Yeah.

ELOISE
What kind of trouble?

HARVEY
Gambling trouble.

ELOISE
Gambling?

HARVEY
Yeah. I was gambling with these
guys from the first century. Mean
guys.

ELOISE
What happened?

HARVEY
Well, I was playing- you know-
gambling cards.

ELOISE
Poker.

HARVEY
Poker! And they dealt me four aces -
those slow rollin' sons of bitches,
they dealt me four aces - so I took
out a loan to call.

ELOISE
Well sure. Four aces.

HARVEY
Exactly.

ELOISE
What happened?

HARVEY
They had the only hand that beats
four aces.

ELOISE
And, what's that?

HARVEY
Four... jokers.

ELOISE
No!

HARVEY
Yeah. Four jokers. Right there.

ELOISE
That's the only thing that beats
aces!

HARVEY
I know! So I had to give them your
gift to pay off the loan.

ELOISE
No! It must have been a really
expensive gift!

HARVEY
Oh, super expensive.

ELOISE
What was it?

HARVEY
Jewels.

ELOISE
No!

HARVEY
Yeah. Big jewels. Size of your
head. Just beautiful.

ELOISE
Well, so here's the problem.

HARVEY
What?

ELOISE
Those guys from the first century?
They were my cousins.

HARVEY
No!

ELOISE
Yeah. And see, I already told them
you were getting me a gift; so, if
they find out you didn't...

HARVEY
Oh, no.

ELOISE
Yeah.

HARVEY
That *is* a problem.

ELOISE
Yeah.

HARVEY
Hm. Maybe I can muster something up
in my room.

ELOISE
Yeah. We better go take a look.

Harvey smiles.

EXT. PATHWAY - NIGHT

Eloise and Harvey walk together. Laughing.

INT. HARVEY'S ROOM - NIGHT

They enter.

HARVEY

Let's see what we got. Oh! Hey,
this might do.

Eloise smiles. Harvey brings her a wrapped package.

ELOISE

What's this?

Harvey doesn't answer.

She opens it.

It's a BOLEX H-16 16mm camera. It's beautiful.

HARVEY

It was made before the 60's, so you
don't have to worry about Cultural
Preservation Laws when you move.

ELOISE

Harvey.

HARVEY

Happy birthday.

Eloise is speechless. This gift is perfect.

She hugs him. They hold each other.

She pulls away and does an excited little jump and squeal.

ELOISE

Eeee!! What should I film?

HARVEY

Anything you want.

ELOISE

How 'bout you?

,HARVEY

Well not *anything*.

ELOISE

Do suandella.

HARVEY

Noooo.

ELOISE
Come on.

HARVEY
No. No.

ELOISE
It's my birthday.

She looks at him. *Please...*

Fine.

MOMENTS LATER

We hear the click of the camera and the sound of film running.

Harvey performs. We realize this is the film Eloise will later show to Nona.

Eloise gets closer and closer to Harvey.

He finishes.

She stops filming him. Lowers the camera.

There's a moment. It's right there. They both stand, staring at each other. This is it... Kiss! Kiss! Kiiiiissss!!!

The moment passes.

ELOISE (CONT'D)
Well... thank you again.

HARVEY
Yeah.

She heads toward the door.

ELOISE
I should-

LEONARD
Yeah.

Cecile nods.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
There is no word to describe the influence one's first love has over the rest of their life.

The camera dips out of the window as we see Cecile leaving Harvey's room.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And in the case of Harvey...

We dip out farther and see his silhouette against the dark building.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

...it was not that he never fell out of love with Eloise, he did. It was that he wouldn't allow himself to love again.

We see Eloise exit the building, and we see Harvey's silhouette watching as she walks along the path outside.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

And so this word that does not exist manifested itself in Harvey like this:

Harvey's bedroom light turns off.

INT. UPSCALE JAZZ LOUNGE - NIGHT

Harvey, looking a little older now and dressed in a dapper suit, walks confidently along the perimeter of the bar until he finds...

A WOMAN (late 20's) sitting alone. She looks bored. Wanting to dance? Harvey gives a small crooked smile as he makes his way over to her. The woman notices. She smiles.

HARVEY

Hello.

We cut to the reverse of the woman, but realize we're no longer in a jazz lounge. We're...

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

...in an enormous ballroom. A WOMAN wearing an elegant black gown smiles at Harvey.

BALLROOM WOMAN

Hello.

HARVEY

Would you like to dance?

BALLROOM WOMAN

Excuse me?

We stay on the woman as we hear Harvey:

HARVEY (PRE-LAP)

I said...

INT. VICTORIAN MANOR - NIGHT

We're inside of the great hall of a Victorian-era manor.

Harvey leans in toward camera.

HARVEY

...would you give me the pleasure
of sharing this dance with you?

We CUT TO the reverse of a VICTORIAN WOMAN blushing.

VICTORIAN WOMAN

The pleasure would be mine, sir.

Harvey smiles. He takes her hand and leads her to the dance floor. They start dancing, her dress swooping in front of the lens as we...

CUT TO:

BALLROOM - NIGHT

Harvey glides across the ballroom with the woman in the black gown. They move toward camera, the back of her dress consuming the lens as we...

CUT TO:

JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

Harvey dances with the woman in the Jazz club. Her dress... yes, consuming the lens as we...

CUT TO:

WESTERN BAR - NIGHT

A NEW WOMAN -- in a plaid shirt, knotted at the waist, turns from the lens and square dances with Harvey. They hop around the dance floor, her back consuming the lens as we...

CUT TO:

WAREHOUSE RAVE - NIGHT

Black. And then, there's a flash of light. Then, there's another. HARVEY, dancing with a MAN. And then the light strobes as we...

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Harvey leaves the dance floor with the woman from the JAZZ CLUB, from the BALLROOM, from the VICTORIAN MANOR.

Harvey leaving with the woman from the WESTERN BAR, and the man from the WAREHOUSE.

All while our narrator says:

*NARRATOR (V.O.)
Harvey loved to be loved. Wanted to
be wanted. Desired desire. But what
he loved to receive, he became
incapable of giving.*

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Inside various bedrooms, Harvey puts on his jacket and leaves the woman from the JAZZ CLUB, from the BALLROOM, from the VICTORIAN MANOR.

Harvey leaving the woman from the WESTERN BAR, and the man from the WAREHOUSE.

All while our narrator says:

*NARRATOR (V.O.)
And so he continued to find himself
feeling the unique loneliness one
only finds while surrounded by
crowds of people.*

EXT. STREET - EARLY MORNING

Harvey walks alone.

*NARRATOR (V.O.)
That is, until...*

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

CARD: HARVEY and MARIE - DECEMBER, 1911, MONTE CARLO

ULTIMATE DATE: DECEMBER, 447

We find Harvey (30) at a roulette table as he extends his hand to place A HUNDRED FRANC bet on BLACK. And as he does so, we see enter frame--

ANOTHER HAND, a woman's hand, that's reached in to place her bet on RED.

We follow her hand up and find--

MARIE (28). Harvey notices her. The ROULETTE BALL goes in.

COURIER
No more bets.

The ball lands on... RED. Marie smiles. Harvey watches her collect her winnings.

He doubles up on black. She does the same on red. They make eye contact. Polite smiles. The ball drops...

COURIER (CONT'D)
No more bets.

RED. Harvey swallows. He doubles up. 400 FRANCS. This time on RED. Marie places her chips on BLACK.

Ball.

COURIER (CONT'D)
No more bets.

BLACK. Harvey looks up at Marie. She shrugs in a way that suggests she's really enjoying this.

Harvey's growing annoyed. He waits for her to place her bet. She seems to wait for him. He eyes to her *go ahead*.

She places her chips on red. Harvey places 800 on red, also.

The ball drops when SUDDENLY--

-- Marie SWITCHES her chips to BLACK. Harvey reaches to change his but...

COURIER (CONT'D)
No more bets.

...too late.

BLACK. Marie cracks up.

MARIE
Oh-hooo! Tre Bien!

Harvey leers. Marie loves it. She nods. *Okay okay*. She puts her chips on black. She nods, encouraging him.

Harvey takes a deep breath. He puts his last 1,600 FRANCS worth of chips on BLACK. He looks up at Marie. She nods. *Trust me*.

The ball drops. Harvey's nervous. The ball jumps and skips around the wheel.

HARVEY
God, let it be black. Let it be black...

COURIER
No more bets!

He closes his eyes. Marie watches, smiling.

The ball skips over the last few slots, landing on...

HARVEY
Let it be black. Let it be black.
Let it be...

COURIER
Black 13!

HARVEY
Ohhhhh!

Relief floods over Harvey. He looks at Marie.

Marie reaches for her winnings. *You're welcome.*

Harvey takes a moment. He drops his head, almost prayer-like. He looks up at Marie again, but...

Marie's gone. He looks down to the table...

So are his chips.

Harvey, frantic, turns to find her. Nowhere. He turns again. Gone. Everywhere he turns, nothing.

He walks through the casino floor, desperately trying to spot her. He can't. She's gone. She robbed him. Just like that. And then...

...there she is. She holds his chips and smiles mischievously.

He's relieved and furious. He walks toward her.

She smiles.

MARIE
Come. I'll buy you a drink.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Harvey and Marie sit at a bar.

Harvey finishes counting his chips.

MARIE
Everything there?

Harvey finishes. Satisfied.

HARVEY
I never want you gambling near me
again.

She smiles.

MARIE
So. Where are you visiting from?

Harvey shrugs. *All over.*

MARIE (CONT'D)
(in French)
Do you speak French?

HARVEY
I'm sorry?

MARIE
Do you speak French?

HARVEY
Oh. No.

MARIE
(in French)
It's too bad.
(back to English)
Are you from the future?

HARVEY
Originally, no. Nineteenth century.
But I went to boarding school in
the future.

MARIE
Yes. You see? No one from the
future bothers to learn French.

A waiter brings their drinks.

HARVEY
Everyone from the future speaks
English. Everyone from the past
learns it. What's the incentive?
(to the waiter)
Thank you.

MARIE
(to the waiter with
subtext)
Merci!
(back to Harvey)
Do you have food in the future?

HARVEY
Do we have food?

MARIE

Yes. Do you have food? Or do you all eat out of plastic tubes or something?

HARVEY

Have you been to the future?

MARIE

Do I look so undignified to you?

Harvey chuckles.

HARVEY

Yes, we have food.

MARIE

And, do you have cinema?

HARVEY

A little. Yeah.

MARIE

And, in the future, do people love?

Harvey doesn't answer.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Because if you truly want to understand food, love, or cinema... translate it into French.

Harvey grins. As though trying to figure Marie out.

MARIE (CONT'D)

You don't believe me?

HARVEY

You stole thirty-two hundred francs from me. I won't believe anything you say, no matter what language it's in.

MARIE

You don't think love is more beautifully described in French?

HARVEY

I don't think love is particularly beautiful at all.

MARIE

Of course not. You speak the wrong language.

Marie stands up.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I'll show you.

HARVEY
You'll show me?

MARIE
(making fun of his accent)
You'll show me? Yes. I'll show you.

She starts to walk slowly around the table toward him.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(in French)
You see... when you speak the
language of love...

They lock eyes. She sits next to him.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(in French)
...it doesn't matter what you
say... it will always sound
romantic.

She moves her face close enough to smell his aftershave. She looks down, taking a deep and sensual breath.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(whispering in French)
Your breath smells like an animal.
Left on the road...
(pause)
...and covered... in death.

She looks at his eyes and then down to his lips. She sighs sweetly before breaking character and going back to her seat.

MARIE (CONT'D)
You see?

Harvey stares at her. Transfixed.

HARVEY
What did you say?

Marie raises her eyebrows. *My point exactly.*

A song plays.

MARIE
I love this song.

Harvey stares at her. We see on his face how reluctant he is, how frightened.

MARIE (CONT'D)
 (hinting)
 It's an excellent song to dance
 to...

Everything Harvey's been avoiding. All the vulnerability.

MARIE (CONT'D)
 (in french, frustrated)
 Oh, how obvious can I be?
 (back to English)
 I'm asking if you'd-

HARVEY
 I don't want to dance.

ON MARIE -- caught off guard. Understanding.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Harvey and Marie make love. We see his jacket on the ground.
 Her dress flies into frame.

They look at each other. This is different. This is special.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Harvey sleeps while Marie lies awake looking anxious.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*It's funny what stories are able to
 do to us.*

She quietly leaves.

HOTEL ROOM - LATER

Harvey wakes.

He goes to grab Marie. She isn't there.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*How they can change us and bend our
 principles without our realizing.*

He looks down at the ground.

His jacket is lying in the same place, but her dress is gone.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*For example, we've seen this story
 from Harvey's perspective.*
 (MORE)

NARRATOR (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*And probably without noticing, were
 able to forgive him for doing to
 others...*

On Harvey, realizing what's happened.

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Marie hurries down the hotel corridor.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*...what we now despise Marie for
 doing to him.*

The elevator door opens. She runs toward it-

FREEZE: On Marie. Sad. Tormented. Frightened.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
So, let us go back.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Marie (7) and her parents (late 30's) travel by car through a winding road.

Marie laughs in the back seat. She's goofing off. She reaches over the seat and covers her father's eyes.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Marie was orphaned at the age of
 seven.*

MOTHER
 (in French)
 No no, Marie. No!

FATHER
 Stop it. No!

HEADLIGHTS FILL THE FRAME. They hit an approaching car.

HARD CUT TO:

BLACKNESS.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*There is no word to describe the
 influence one's first love has over
 the rest of their life.*

EXT. HOSPITAL WINDOW - MORNING

Through the window, we see a numb Marie (still 7) staring blankly outside.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*In the case of Marie, it kept her
 from ever believing that she
 deserved love.*

EXT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Marie (13) sneaks out of an open window.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Afterward, any time she felt the
 creeping signs of adoration, of
 fondness, of love...*

She runs across the front lawn.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A CON MAN (late 20's) flirts with Marie (17).

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*At seventeen, she met a con man she
 knew would never love her.*

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Marie and the Con Man, at a casino chapel.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And so she married him immediately.

EXT. LAS VEGAS STRIP - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

We're in an older, Rat Pack era, Las Vegas.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*They traveled the world's casinos
 together...*

INT. CASINO - NIGHT

Ball being dropped in a Roulette wheel.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...conning men in Las Vegas...

CON MAN (COURIER)
 No more bets.

Marie, taking a load of chips.

INT. DIFFERENT CASINO - NIGHT

Ball being dropped in a Roulette wheel.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...in Atlantic City.

CON MAN (COURIER)
 No more bets.

Marie, taking a load of chips.

INT. DIFFERENT CASINO - NIGHT

Ball being dropped in a Roulette wheel.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...in Shanghai.

CON MAN (COURIER)
 No more bets.

Marie, taking a load of chips.

INT. DIFFERENT CASINO - NIGHT

Ball being dropped in a Roulette wheel.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...and in Monte Carlo.

CON MAN (COURIER)
 No more bets.

Harvey watches.

It lands on BLACK.

We watch Marie watch Harvey. She smiles.

Marie hesitates. Then, reluctantly, she takes the load of chips and walks away. Looking back at Harvey looking for her.
What is it with this guy?

CASINO - MOMENTS LATER

Marie walks quickly through the casino floor. She turns a corner, out of sight, and stops. Thinking.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*There was something about Harvey
that broke her heart. Something she
wanted to know. Something she was
drawn toward.*

She turns around and walks back onto the casino floor.

There she sees Harvey, desperately looking for...

Her. He finds her. He walks toward her.

She smiles.

MARIE

Come on. I'll buy you a-

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Marie wakes up. She leaves.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*She felt that she could love him.
Or worse, that he could love her.
And so, she did what she'd always
done.*

INT. HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

OVER THE FROZEN IMAGE OF MARIE LEAVING. It starts moving again. Marie enters the elevator. The door begins closing as we glimpse Marie's expression and see the disappointment she seems to have for herself.

The elevator doors close.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

But that wasn't the end of their relationship, it was just the beginning.

The CAMERA PANS to find the Narrator in the hallway.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

And this is where everything begins to come together: Why it is I'm here. Who it is I am. Or, at least, used to be...

Thinking. Then resolved.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Stories can be tricky. Sometimes it's hard to know what to tell to whom, and when.

(beat)

(MORE)

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
So, I'll tell you what... let's go
back to the beginning--

INT. TIME PORT - MORNING

Leonard, our lonely wine maker from page 1, POPS into 1960's Paris.

The time machine whirs to silence.

INT. CAB - LATER

Leonard jumps into a YELLOW TAXI.

LEONARD
Ministry of Health.

CABBIE
(in french)
Which wing?

LEONARD
The Research Facility.

Leonard leans back. On the radio, we hear a french announcer describing the same soccer game we saw projected as Leonard left the future. We hear the crowd roar.

RADIO ANNOUNCER
Goal!

Leonard stares out the window and watches 1960's Paris pass him.

He looks nervous.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Leonard sits on a couch near the reception desk. The ward is futuristic. Rooms are separated by clear glass walls so that everything is transparent. However, some rooms are made private with seemingly floating curtains. The trim of the walls and threshold are a smooth, dark wood. It's all very elegant.

DOCTOR ABNER (60's) approaches.

ABNER
Leonard?

LEONARD
Yes?

ABNER
I'm Doctor Abner. Thanks for coming
in.

LEONARD
Yeah.

ABNER
Follow me this way.

They walk and talk.

LEONARD
They said that nothing is wrong?

ABNER
It's a bit more complicated than
that.

LEONARD
Something is wrong?

ABNER
Something is unusual.

LEONARD
Okay.

ABNER
I'll show you. I was sorry to hear
about your mother, by the way.

LEONARD
Oh.

ABNER
She was an incredibly kind woman.

LEONARD
I didn't know she visited.

Abner stops in front of a room. It's one of the rooms
separated by curtains.

ABNER
She visited every week before she
was sick.

LEONARD
I didn't realize...

Abner nods.

ABNER
(re: the room)
This is us.

He opens the door to a patient's room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

From the perspective of the patient's bed, we see Abner lead Leonard into the room. Leonard stares at the patient. His eyes well. Being here isn't easy for him.

Abner pushes a button on the wall and from the ground rises a transparent desk with a computer interface on it.

ABNER
Would you like a coffee or
anything?

Abner notices Leonard staring.

ABNER (CONT'D)
Leonard?

LEONARD
Oh. Um. No. Thank you.

Abner nods.

ABNER
(re: the computer desk)
Let me show you why I brought you
in.

Abner touches the desk interface and a holographic map illuminates between him and Leonard. It almost looks like images of neural pathways. Except here, the pathways begin at one distinct place and then branch out.

ABNER (CONT'D)
So, as you know, blips on the map
aren't too note worthy, although
they are rare. What's unusual about
this is-

LEONARD
I'm sorry. What's a blip represent
exactly?

ABNER
I...
(surprised)
Just a sudden glimpse of a
patient's consciousness.

LEONARD
I see.

ABNER
Yes. Now the map, of course, is
limited to the-

LEONARD
And the map is?

ABNER
The map?

LEONARD
Yes. What does the uh... map represent again?

ABNER
I'm sorry, I assumed- Maybe I should begin...

Abner thinks. This is obviously all basic information he thought Leonard would understand.

LEONARD
I didn't know my dad very well. I mean I was only seven when- and I haven't come in since because... He wasn't the greatest guy. So I...

Leonard trails off.

ABNER
I understand.
(thinking)
Okay. Let me ask you this: how familiar are you with the physics of time travel in general?

LEONARD
Just whatever's still rattling around from high school.

ABNER
Okay. Well, when we travel through time, we regulate exactly what dimension it is we travel inside of. That's why when you travel from 2500 to 1500, you don't alter the past and create a paradox that would essentially change the course of events so that your parents would never meet and thus never have you and thus never afford you the opportunity to change the past in the first place.

LEONARD
Right...

ABNER
The way we regulate that dimension is through timeline compression, and the way we avoid a paradox is by continuing on what we call the ultimate timeline.

LEONARD
Yes...

ABNER

It helps to imagine it visually. If we travel through time the way we might travel through a building - by taking an elevator up and down - Then the ultimate timeline would look like a moving sidewalk which our elevator sits on top of.

LEONARD

Okay.

ABNER

So even as we're moving up and down, between the future and the past...

He moves his hand up and down.

ABNER (CONT'D)

...we're constantly also moving laterally.

He moves his hand sideways.

ABNER (CONT'D)

The ultimate timeline is essentially *our* dimension.

LEONARD

Yeah.

ABNER

So, obviously, it's important that when we travel through time, we *stay* in our dimension. What happened with your father, however, was a dimensional skip. It's an anomaly that can occur during time travel which is incredibly rare, to the point where it's actually only happened three times in the 500 years since time travel was invented. And only once in the last three hundred years.

LEONARD

Yeah, how rare it is I do remember.

ABNER

Yes. The technology we use to keep everyone inside of the same dimension broke down, and so the time machine your father was in rubbed up against another dimension and jumped back into our own, so that his body remained with us, but his *consciousness* began jumping between dimensions.

LEONARD

So his brain is skipping between here and the other dimension it touched when the accident occurred.

ABNER

His brain is skipping in and out of every dimension that has come into existence since the accident occurred.

LEONARD

How many of those are there?

Abner gestures to the map.

ABNER

Infinity. This map is limited to every dimension that was created in the exact moment of the skip.

LEONARD

And how many of *those* are there?

ABNER

Infinity.

LEONARD

But, I thought you said the map was limited.

ABNER

It is. There are infinite infinities.

LEONARD

Oh, god.

Leonard collapses his head into his hands.

ABNER

Here's what you need to know: it has always been assumed that consciousness couldn't direct itself. Essentially, a consciousness didn't *have* a consciousness. It couldn't control which dimension to be in, so it blipped in and out, existing in one vessel only for fractions of a second before skipping on to some other. Which is why your father looks to be in a coma; he has no control over which dimension to occupy. If he, or one of the infinite versions of him lying in this room in other dimensions, *could* control his consciousness that would be...

(MORE)

ABNER (CONT'D)
 (Abner has a look of child
 like wonder)
 ...unimaginable.

He smiles excitedly.

ABNER (CONT'D)
 The possibilities are-

LEONARD
 Infinite?

Abner laughs.

ABNER
 Look here.

Abner controls the map so it zooms in on two DIMENSIONS. We see two BLIPS simultaneously.

ABNER (CONT'D)
 Did you see that?

LEONARD
 What?

ABNER
 Look here. And here. I'll go slower.

He shows again. The two BLIPS.

ABNER (CONT'D)
 You see?

He shows again. Closer now. Slower.

ABNER (CONT'D)
 Two blips. At the exact same time.

LEONARD
 So what, he's in two dimensions at once?

ABNER
 He was. This is a playback from yesterday when we called you.

LEONARD
 And is this uncommon?

ABNER
 It's unprecedented.

Abner zooms the map out even more, so that those two dimensions become practically indistinguishable.

LEONARD
What's happened since then?

ABNER
This.

We see the map. Thousands of blips appear. Hundreds of thousands. Millions.

On Leonard witnessing the wonder of this map, staring at the blips twinkling before him.

ABNER (CONT'D)
Your father, I believe, has developed the ability to *control* his consciousness. He can *choose* which dimension to enter, and when to enter it. I believe he's travelling through interdimensional time and space. With a purpose.

Leonard looks at his father and we, for the first time, cut to him, too.

There, in the hospital bed, looking to be asleep is the NARRATOR.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

The Narrator, dressed as the BARTENDER, approaches--

MARIE. We can tell by her dress, and her makeup, and her demeanor, that this is only a few minutes after she left Harvey in the hotel room.

NARRATOR
Madam?

She looks up.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
A gentlemen asked me to bring you-

MARIE
I'll buy my own drinks. Thank you.

NARRATOR
It's not a drink.

The Narrator hands her A LETTER.

She looks confused.

MARIE
Sorry. I...
(she accepts the letter)
Thank you.

She begins to read it. A little startled.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Who is this from?

She looks up-- but the Narrator is gone.

She continues reading. She looks up again. Trying to find the author. She goes back to reading. She's moved. She places her hand over her heart.

She stands up looking... looking for... She finds him. *Of course...*

HARVEY-- at the other end of the bar. Drinking alone.

He stirs his drink. We see the liquid swirling around.

MARIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Harvey.

Harvey looks up. He looks surprised.

HARVEY
Marie.

MARIE
Listen.

LONG BEAT.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I have a hard time with love.

That deflates Harvey.

HARVEY
(somehow understanding)
So do I.
(beat)
Maybe it's something we can help
each other with.

She nods.

He stands.

They embrace. Marie still holds the LETTER as we hear...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Dear Marie. My Marie. There are
emotions that no one has bothered
to assign a word.*

LETTER MONTAGE:

(THE IMAGES HERE ARE PRESENTED IN 8MM SATURATED COLOR-- Like an old home movie...)

Harvey's POV: Marie, in a small Parisian apartment, hanging pictures.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Like the warmth one feels building
 a home.*

Marie, painting walls. Rearranging furniture.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Or the comfort one feels after a
 long conversation...*

Marie, lying on a blanket against a hilly landscape, her hair moving with a gentle breeze, resting her head against her hand, talking passionately.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*The weight of worry we feel as we
 age, and begin to detect we might
 never achieve the dreams that for
 so long defined us.*

Harvey's POV: A letter, if we can read it at all, which says, "We regret to inform you that"... And Marie, holding Harvey's face, mouthing: "It's okay. Hey... It's okay"

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And this:

Marie and Harvey... in a convertible driving, the wind blowing her hair.

Marie and Harvey... dancing, arguing, laughing...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Marie, you and I loved together. We
 grew together. Changed together.
 You made me better.*

Marie and Harvey... on a walk, holding each other, making each other laugh, playing in bed, dancing, singing, crying, comforting...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*But the ultimate timeline ticked
 on, and lust turned to complacence.*

Harvey, older (looking more like the Narrator), at his desk going through papers as Marie tries to be silly with him.

HARVEY
 I need to work.
 (off her disappointment)
 Hey!
 (annoyed)
 Don't make me feel ba-

Harvey, staring out the window.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
There is no word for the anger you project onto someone for the disappointment you feel in yourself.

Harvey... rejecting Marie. Ignoring Marie. Alone. Drinking.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
I took you for granted, Marie. I began to resent you because I was too proud to resent myself... And the ultimate timeline dripped on.

Harvey flirting with a young woman in his office. She smiles. He closes the door.

Harvey smiling across the bar at another woman.

Marie, alone. Pacing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
There is no word for the want a person has to know that something horrible is happening; simply so that they might stop wondering if it is.

Marie on the phone:

MARIE
 I'm not sure when it is you're supposed to be home, but I wanted to tell you-

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And no word to describe the desperate and agonizing desire we all have to reverse time.

The images we've seen begin to reverse.

Harvey opens the door to his office. He doesn't reject Marie. He puts the letter back in the envelope. They drive backward, they un-paint the walls...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

There is no word to describe the nostalgia one feels for unpleasant memories. The longing I feel for a sadness I can't remember. What I wouldn't do to go back, Marie. To be that sad, miserable man again. Just to kiss you one last time; to tell you that I loved you the whole time.

And then, we see the last sequence again but in reverse:

Harvey and Marie in the bar, Harvey and Marie in the hotel, Harvey and Marie in the casino...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

But even more than that, I wish so badly I could rob myself of your love, to save you from mine. I wish I could have kept myself away from you. And I would have. I would have gone back and kept us from ever meeting, except...

Marie (older)-- in labor

Harvey (older too) enters frame. We fully recognize him as the Narrator now. He looks at Marie.

Harvey, holding his newborn son. Leonard.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It's hard to know unless you are one, but all fathers of young children are human beings...

Harvey, a mess, trying to feed Leonard. He looks like he hasn't slept in days.

Harvey, yelling at Leonard.

HARVEY

We do not run away. You scared me.
Do you underst-

Harvey, alone. Even messier. Even more sad. Contemplating...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

With dreams and ambitions, all but forgotten, until they lie awake at night, filled with an emotion that does not have a word...

Now we see HARVEY AS A CHILD-- energetic, excited...

OVERLAPPED WITH...

HARVEY AS A TEENAGER-- flirting with girls, laughing with Eloise...

OVERLAPPED WITH...

HARVEY AS A YOUNG MAN-- on a train, romantically gazing off into the distance, his future, seducing women, drinking...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

...which describes the anxiety one feels when they are confronted with the fact that they are not the man they'd planned to be, and that the opportunity to become that man has passed; and inside that realization the sadness and loneliness that comes as a result of not knowing yourself, and you begin to wonder if you even like yourself...

OVERLAPPED WITH...

HARVEY AS A HUSBAND AND FATHER-- having affairs, unable to look at himself, drinking

OVERLAPPED WITH...

The Narrator, gazing down... as though at all of these moments overlapped on top of each other. Able to understand them all at once. Regretful, nostalgic...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Marie. What I wouldn't give to return to that time. To feel that wordless emotion again. To let my temper get the better of me, to yell at him for being a child, while I am forced to be a man. To be with you, the moment you meet the woman he'll one day marry. To be with you. To go back to that time, before I was gone...

HARVEY-- hugging a young Leonard (7) in the front yard of their home.

HARVEY

I'll be home soon...

TIME MACHINE - NIGHT

Harvey's time machine FALTERS, a barrier SHATTERS, he sees himself looking away from himself, like inside of an infinity mirror, and then his window BREAKS, he looks scared, the MACHINE SHAKES and his head CRACKS against the "MIRROR"--

CUT TO:

BLACK.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Life does not guarantee us
 happiness. And there is nothing
 wrong with a person who is sad, or
 worried. What I wouldn't give to
 not understand that again, Marie,
 because when I didn't, it was
 because I was with you.*

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Marie, outside of the hospital room. Reading the letter.
 Crying.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Proving, all the time, how unworthy
 I always was...*

END MONTAGE.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Marie walks into the waiting room and finds a confused
 Leonard (still age 7).

He doesn't notice his mother. She stares at him.

MARIE
 Leonard?

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Leonard (now in his 30's) sits in the same waiting room. He
 wears the same worried expression.

NURSE (O.S.)
 Leonard.

Leonard snaps his attention toward the sound of the voice.
 It's an elderly NURSE.

NURSE (CONT'D)
 You can see her now.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard enters to find Marie (now in her 80's) lying in a
 hospital bed.

CARD: MARIE and LEONARD - MAY, 1819

ULTIMATE DATE: OCTOBER, 493 AT

Leonard walks over. Marie smiles.

MARIE
Seems I've gotten myself into a bit
of trouble, no?

Leonard chuckles. He sits.

LEONARD
I've been in that waiting room
before.

MARIE
I wondered if you remembered.

LEONARD
After dad's accident.

MARIE
Have you visited him lately?

Leonard forces a smile. Changing the subject:

LEONARD
How're you feeling?

MARIE
Wonderful. They have me on
something.

There's a twinkle in Marie's eye.

LEONARD
I've got some good news.

MARIE
Hm?

LEONARD
You can go home tomorrow.

MARIE
Noo!

LEONARD
Yeah.

MARIE
Ohh, Lenny!

LEONARD
M.O.H. is going to put your bed in
the living room. And they'll have a
full time health care worker there
to make sure you're comfortable.

MARIE
Oh, that's wonderf-

Marie begins coughing. It goes on a while. Leonard suppresses how sad and worried it makes him.

MARIE (CONT'D)
It'll be nice to be home.

LEONARD
Do you need anything before then?
Can I do anything for you?

She looks at him. There's clearly something very important that she needs. But she's worried about asking...

MARIE
Well Maggie's been watering the plants while I've away-

LEONARD
Yeah. Of course. I'll get her a bottle of something nice.

MARIE
And John needs you to sign some things for the will.

LEONARD
Sure. I'll stop by his office tomorrow before I get you. Anything else?

MARIE
Yes.

She looks at him. This one is big...

Leonard gets it. He leans in.

LEONARD
What is it, Mom? What?

MARIE
I would also like you to fall in love, please.

Leonard takes that in. Surprised. Confused. Tickled.

MARIE (CONT'D)
There was a letter.

LEONARD
(gently)
Mom-

MARIE
Just listen. There was a letter-

LEONARD
Dad's letter.

MARIE
Yes. And he said-

LEONARD
That wasn't-

MARIE
He said that I would meet the woman
our son would marry.

Leonard takes a deep breath.

LEONARD
Mom, have the doctors talked to you
about how much time you have?

MARIE
The doctors don't understand.

LEONARD
Have they?

MARIE
The letter-

LEONARD
It was a love letter. Dad couldn't-
Mom... Dad couldn't read the
future. It was just romantic-

MARIE
No.

LEONARD
Mom, you know I would love- Of
course I would, but... the doctors
are saying you only have a few
days.

MARIE
They don't understand.

LEONARD
Understand what?

MARIE
That I won't die until you have
someone, Leonard. I won't do it.

LEONARD
I just want you to manage your
expectations.

Behind him, the door quietly opens; and through it - out of
focus - enters a NURSE.

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)
 I mean, who do you imagine, over
 the next few days, is going to
 magically walk into my life...

The nurse comes into clearer focus. She's a young woman... we
 get where this is going.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
 ...that I'll suddenly fall so
 desperately in love with that-

CECILE
 Marie?

Leonard turns to the voice and finds:

CECILE-- who we of course remember divorcing Sanjay on page
 20.

CECILE (CONT'D)
 I'm Cecile.

LEONARD
 (to himself)
 Right...

SOUND OF A BICYCLE BELL *CLING CLING...*

EXT. NAPA VALLEY STREET - AFTERNOON

A BICYCLE flies through frame as we whip pan to follow it.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Of course, Marie didn't die over
 the next few days, nor did she die
 over the next few weeks, nor the
 next few months.*

Cecile, on her bicycle.

CARD: LEONARD and CECILE - MAY, 1819

ULTIMATE DATE: OCTOBER, 493 AT

She passes a gate and enters...

MARIE'S PROPERTY - CONTINUOUS

She climbs off her bike as it wheels toward the front porch.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And over the course of a year, she
 and Leonard - along with her nurse,
 Cecile - developed a home together.*

INT. MARIE'S HOME - FRONT HALL

Cecile enters the house. She's holding flowers.

CECILE

Hello!

Leonard calls out:

LEONARD (O.S.)

Hi!

He pops his head out of the kitchen.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

I'm making salmon. Are you hungry?

CECILE

Starving!

Marie calls out from the LIVING ROOM.

MARIE

Cecile, those are beautiful!

CECILE

Merci, Marie! I got them for you.

She walks into the...

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cecile and Marie admire the flowers together...

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*Every night the three of them
shared dinner, and then Leonard
would read to Marie.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard reads to Marie.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*It was his favorite time of the
day.*

Marie sits quietly, peering toward Leonard.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

*Marie's favorite time came later,
when she would interrupt her son to
ask-*

MARIE

Did you fall in love today?

Cecile sits in the corner, knitting. She grins.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Cecile cherished it all. She
 cherished Marie. And although she
 hardly admitted it to herself. She
 cherished Leonard also. She loved
 him. She loved the way he...*

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

CLOSE ON-- Leonard, *laughing...*

NARRATOR (V.O.)
She loved the way he...

EXT. MARIE'S BACK YARD - DAY

CLOSE ON-- Leonard, running his hands through his hair...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
The way he...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Leonard, doing dishes. Humming to himself.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
She loved how terribly he lied.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Leonard talks with Cecile.

LEONARD
 Oh, yeah, yeah. I've seen that
 movie.

CECILE
 (smiling)
 You haven't, have you?

LEONARD
 (laughing)
 No. No I haven't. I just didn't
 want to stop your story...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*She loved the way he looked when he
 felt confused...*

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard, learning a card game, trying to understand the rules...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And that he wrote down words he
didn't know...*

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard reading.

LEONARD
Hold on...

Jotting down a word.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Don't know that one.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And she loved the way he loved her.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Leonard, stealing glances of Cecile.

Leonard, smiling at Cecile, unable to break eye contact.

Leonard, walking with Cecile around the property at sunset.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*And Leonard did love her. He loved
the way she...*

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cecile, asleep on a rocking chair, sighs deeply.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*...when she fell asleep. The way
she...*

CLOSE ON-- Cecile. She *gasps* in shock...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*...when she watched a movie. He
loved the way, when she thought
deeply about something, she...*

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Cecile, thinking, taps her pencil against her lips.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...with a pencil...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Cecile taps her lips with a knitting needle...

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...with a needle...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

NARRATOR (V.O.)
...with her playing cards.

EXT. MARIE'S HOME - MORNING

From a distance, we see Leonard talking with Cecile.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And Leonard loved that she was married, because it freed him from the overwhelming anxiety he'd feel in trying to court her if she wasn't; and it absolved him of the disappointment he'd surely endure upon his failure. But more than anything, he loved that she was there. Simply there, every night, as he read...

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Leonard is reading to Marie.

LEONARD
 "About here she thought, dabbling her fingers in the water, a ship had sunk, and she muttered, dreamily half asleep, how we perish, each alone."
 (re: the passage)
 God. This is really grim. Are you sure you want me reading this?

Marie looks at him.

MARIE
 I'd have died yesterday if I knew you'd had someone.

LEONARD
 Well, god. That's even more grim.

We find Cecile, tucked away in the corner of the living room, preparing medications.

She smiles over Marie's melodrama.

MARIE

I know exactly when it would have been. I was looking here...

(gesturing out the window)

...and a cloud passed over the sun, and the wind blew, and then, for a moment, there was an incredible silence, and I thought...

(in French)

...this would be a nice time to go.

(back to English)

But then I remembered how unmarried my son is, and so I *wrenched* myself back in.

LEONARD

Well, I'm glad you did.

MARIE

They gave me three days - week at the most - to live.

Cecile approaches.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Three days, Cecile. A week at the most!

Cecile shares a smile with Leonard.

CECILE

And here you are.

MARIE

And here I am.

LEONARD

And here you are.

Cecile approaches with Marie's medication.

MARIE

And you don't feel bad about that?

(for Cecile)

Ahhhh.

Cecile drops the medicine on Marie's tongue.

LEONARD

No, and even if it were true-

MARIE

It is!

LEONARD

Even if it *were* true that a person could avoid death for some abstract reason-

MARIE

It is true!

LEONARD

Even if it *were*! I *still* wouldn't feel bad, you know why?

MARIE

Why?

LEONARD

Because here you are! And I don't want you to die!

MARIE

But I do Lenny! And of course it's possible to avoid death for abstract reasons! People avoid *life* for abstract reasons all the time! You don't think the opposite can be true? I'm in *pain*, Lenny.

LEONARD

I know.

MARIE

So maybe tomorrow? Maybe you'll find someone tomorrow?

Leonard takes a deep breath. Heartbroken:

LEONARD

Maybe.

MARIE

I can't die until you have someone, Lenny.

LEONARD

I know.

MARIE

I can't do it.

Cecile swallows listening to this.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

It was always at this moment, however, that Cecile would feel the sadness of reality re-envelope her.

EXT. NAPA VALLEY - STREET - PRE DAWN

Cecile rides her bike through the streets. The sky brightens with each new shot.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
Because love was not as simple as Marie seemed to imagine. It was a labyrinth you had to work, and solve, and try to beat. A labyrinth that, at present, Cecile and her husband Sanjay were losing very badly.

INT. CECILE'S APARTMENT HALLWAY - MORNING

Cecile enters.

We stay outside the apartment. We hear from inside:

SANJAY (O.S.)
 Cecile?

CECILE
 Sanjay?

The door closes.

SANJAY (O.S.)
 (muffled through door)
 Hey! I'm sorry- I didn't have time to make a proper breakfast.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE SAME SHOT.

SOUND OF MUFFLED YELLING.

We hear:

SANJAY (O.S.)
 Because of how incredibly sad you make me.

The door opens.

We see, between the threshold and the door, Cecile's miserably exhausted face.

CECILE
 We need to get a divorce.

We stay here a moment, remembering that we've seen this exchange before...

INT. FRONT HALL - NIGHT

Cecile stares out of the window. She looks numb. She looks down at her hand. No wedding band.

LEONARD (O.S.)
Hi.

Cecile turns to find Leonard.

CECILE
Hi.

LEONARD
You okay?

CECILE
Yeah. Is she-

LEONARD
Asleep.

CECILE
(glancing at her tablet)
Oh.

LEONARD
You sure you're okay?

CECILE
Yeah. I um...

She rubs her wedding finger.

CECILE (CONT'D)
Yeah. I'm just off today.

Leonard nods. *I see.*

He hesitates.

LEONARD
I uh... I got you something.

She looks at him. Eyes beginning to water.

He walks over with a present.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Just a, um, thank you. For the past year.

He hands her a book with a little bow on it. It's a FRENCH PHRASE BOOK.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
So you can keep practicing once...

Cecile wipes a tear out of her eye.

CECILE
Thank you.

INT. FRONT HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Cecile watches as Leonard exits the house and walks across the front yard.

She looks at her ring-less finger again and takes a deep breath.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Cecile enters. She looks at Marie sleeping. And then, loudly, says:

CECILE
Hello, Marie.

Marie turns.

MARIE
How did you know I wasn't sleeping?

CECILE
(re: the tablet)
I know everything!

MARIE
Gah! The future!
(in French)
You take all the mystery out of
life!

Cecile sits down and begins administering medications for Marie.

CECILE
(repeating in French)
You take all the mystery out of...

She mumbles the last bit.

MARIE
(in French)
Out. Of. Life.

CECILE
(in French)
Out. Of. Life.

MARIE
Tres bien.

BEAT. Marie inspects Cecile.

CECILE
How are you feeling?

MARIE
Terrible.

CECILE
Physically?

MARIE
Physically, I'm fine.

CECILE
Emotionally?

MARIE
Terrible.

Cecile cracks a smile.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I don't understand. He told me in
the letter.

CECILE
What's that?

MARIE
He wrote it. *"What I wouldn't give
to be with you, the moment you meet
the woman he'll one day marry."* He
told me-

CECILE
What are you-

MARIE
I'm supposed to meet the woman he
marries. I don't die until I do.

CECILE
I know.

MARIE
So where is she?

CECILE
(casually without
thinking)
Maybe you have met her.

Marie considers that. She looks at Cecile.

MARIE
What?

CECILE
Maybe you met her. It could have
been years ago. Maybe you met her,
it's just no one realizes she'll be
married to Leonard one day.

MARIE
Maybe I've met her...

She stares at Cecile.

MARIE (CONT'D)
(realizing)
You're not wearing your wedding
ring.

CECILE
Oh. No.

MARIE
It's you.

CECILE
No, no, no.

MARIE
Of course it is! What happened to
your ring?

CECILE
Well. We decided-

MARIE
When?

CECILE
Marie.

MARIE
Come! I see the way you look at
him. And the way he looks at you!
Of course!

CECILE
No. Marie. Really.

MARIE
What? He's handsome, no?

CECILE
I-

MARIE
And he's kind?

CECILE
Of course-

MARIE
He's handsome, he's kind, why not
try?

CECILE
I-

MARIE
Please, Cecile. Please.

Marie looks so desperate, so vulnerable.

MARIE (CONT'D)
I can't go until he has someone.

CECILE
I know.

MARIE
So won't you? Won't you try?

Cecile taps her lips, concerned. She shouldn't.

MARIE (CONT'D)
Please?

Oh, dear. She is...

CECILE
Well, you see... we have.

MARIE
(in disbelief)
No!

CECILE
But we didn't want to tell you.

Marie's face lights up.

MARIE
Tell me what?

CECILE
Well, we've started to see each
other.

MARIE
No!

CECILE
Yes.

MARIE
Why- Wha- Why would you keep that a
secret?!

CECILE
We didn't want to get your hopes up
in case it didn't work out.

MARIE
How long has it been?!

CECILE
A while.

MARIE
Really?

CECILE
Oh yes. A long while.

MARIE
And is he good to you?

CECILE
Oh... yes.

MARIE
Tell me!

CECILE
Well... He's kind. He's the kindest
man I've ever known. And sweet. He
brings me little things he finds
that remind him of me. And he holds
my hand. He makes me feel
beautiful. All the things I don't
like about myself, when I'm with
him, I somehow love. And he makes
me laugh.

MARIE
Oh yes. He's very funny.

CECILE
Yes, but it's not just that. I find
myself smiling even when he's not
being funny. Like when he looks
concerned about finding parking, or
deciding which movie to see.

MARIE
So you've traveled even?

CECILE
Oh, yes. We've traveled through the
future and the past.

Marie, eyes welling with tears, folds her hands and presses
them against her chest.

MARIE
How did it begin?

CECILE

Um... here. You had fallen asleep and we went on a walk together. He told me about his childhood. How much he cares for you. And how all he wanted was to be as good a husband to his wife as his father was to you. And how all he needed was to find a woman as wonderful for him as you were to his father. And I thought, even then, on that first night, it could be me. I wanted it to be me so much.

Marie drifts off.

MARIE

And do you think it is?

CECILE

(in French)

Yes. I do.

(in English)

I really do.

Marie, almost gone now, has one last burst of euphoria and passes.

Cecile is surprised.

CECILE (CONT'D)

Marie?

(nervous)

Marie!?

ON Cecile: *What have I done?*

CRASH OF THUNDER.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

Bird's eye view of UMBRELLAS OPENING as rain begins to fall upon an open grave.

People file in line to throw dirt over Marie's casket.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

The funeral took place on a rainy morning a week later, on the date of Marie's birth, in Paris, 1942.

We find the Narrator amongst those mourning.

NARRATOR

I attended, of course. I always do. Leonard gave a moving speech. Marie was present, obviously.

We see a TIGHT SHOT of Marie's casket.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
And Cecile.

We see Cecile. Crying.

Cecile throws dirt over the grave. Leonard watches her.

CEMETERY - LATER

Mourners approach Leonard to offer condolences.

MOURNER 1
I'm so sorry, Lenny.

LEONARD
Thank you.

MOURNER 2
I'm sorry, Leonard.

LEONARD
Thank you.

CECILE
Leonard.

Leonard turns to find Cecile. Relieved, he gasps:

LEONARD
Cecile.

CECILE
I'm so sorry.

LEONARD
Listen, I wanted to tell you-

CECILE
No. I don't- I told her...

LEONARD
What? Cecile, what happened?

CECILE
I don't know why I did it. I told her- She was just so- because she wanted it to be true. And I...

Leonard begins to understand.

LEONARD
You told her-

MOURNER 3
Leonard.

LEONARD
 (the mourner)
 Yes, just...

CECILE
 I'm so sorry, Leonard.

LEONARD
 (distracted by the line of
 mourners)
 Will you just give me one second.

CECILE
 I'm so sorry.

MOURNER 4
 I'm sorry, Leonard.

Leonard turns to the mourner.

LEONARD
 Thank you. I-

MOURNER 4
 She was an incredible spirit.

LEONARD
 Thank you. If I could just- Just
 one second, I need to-

He turns back to Cecile...

...but she's gone.

He looks around for her... She's no where.

INT. MINISTRY OF HEALTH BUILDING - DAY

Leonard sits at the desk of an ADMINISTRATOR.

ADMINISTRATOR
 What was her name?

LEONARD
 Cecile Patel. P-A-T-E-L. She was
 with my mom for the last year.

ADMINISTRATOR
 Yes. Here. It looks like Cecile
 left the Ministry of Health,
 though.

LEONARD
 She...?

ADMINISTRATOR
Left. Last week. I have her
address, though.

EXT. CECILE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Leonard talks with Sanjay outside of the apartment.

SANJAY
I haven't seen her since she asked
for the divorce.

LEONARD
The divorce?

SANJAY
Yeah. She just left. Out of
nowhere.

LEONARD
I see. I'm sorry.

SANJAY
Who are you?

LEONARD
I'm- She took care of my mom. I
just... wanted to thank her.

SANJAY
Yeah well, I'm sorry I can't help
you.

Leonard nods, and goes to leave.

LEONARD
Thanks.

SANJAY
France maybe.

Leonard turns back.

SANJAY (CONT'D)
She talked a lot lately about
wanting to learn French. I figure
maybe there. Don't know where or
when though.

Leonard nods. That helps.

LEONARD
Thanks.

SANJAY
Yeah.

EXT. VINEYARD - DAY

Vines are growing.

Leonard types into a holographic screen. Next to him lies a WATERING DRONE. The DRONE JUMPS UP and begins hovering.

Behind him, the house is nearly finished.

EXT. VINEYARD - EVENING

It's our OPENING SCENE.

Leonard walks through the vineyard. Checking his grapes. He bends down, rubs his fingers through the dirt, touches the leaves, smells the vine.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Leonard. In bed alone. Watching the holographic screen projected at the foot of his bed.

REPORTER

The Quintennial Cup continues tomorrow with the semi-final match. German Captain Rolf Mueller leads the underdog nineteenth-century team against Brazilian super star, Paolo Johnson, for the twenty-first-century.

SOUND OF DING.

FULL SCREEN VIDEO

A quick PIANO INTRO accompanies the TEXT ON HIS SCREEN: **MINISTRY OF HEALTH** with the voice over:

VOICEOVER

This is a message from the Ministry of Health's Inter-time Hospital and Research Facility.

On Leonard's face.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

The hospital ward is empty.

Leonard sits next to his father's bed. He's reading.

It's dark except for the little lamp he has on.

There's the Narrator. Unconscious.

Leonard puts the book on his lap. Closes his eyes. Nodding off. Almost asleep.

NARRATOR

Hello, son.

Leonard wakes up.

He looks at his father. Awake.

He breaks down. They hug.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Leonard pours two glasses of wine.

NARRATOR

At first it was to change everything. With your mother. To be better for her. But that didn't work because it adjusted our timeline so that we wouldn't have you. Dozens of dimensions you originally existed in that now...

LEONARD

God.

NARRATOR

Yeah. Sorry.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

Then it was just being a good father. I went into dimensions. Hundreds of thousands. And relived my life to be the perfect dad. I changed the past so that I never had my accident, and lived.

LEONARD

But you stopped. Otherwise I wouldn't be here now.

NARRATOR

I stopped. Living the same life over and over, knowing exactly what to do and say to make everything perfect, makes nothing perfect. And I changed. I was no longer me. I was no longer a person. I just became this... craftsman of time. And I couldn't make you happy like that.

LEONARD
 An immortal being with god like
 control of time and space can't
 make me happy. There isn't much
 hope is there?

The Narrator chuckles.

One Leonard, realizing:

LEONARD (CONT'D)
 You've heard me make that joke
 before.

The Narrator nods.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
 How many times?

NARRATOR
 Enough times to know it's different
 every time. And the nuances still
 make me laugh.

LEONARD
 So then... what is all of this?
 What are you doing?

NARRATOR
 I conduct a carousel. And it leads
 to this moment. So that I can tell
 you one thing:

Leonard braces himself for the gravity of this...

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 You aren't going to live happily
 ever after. It's going to be hard.
 And you're going to be sad. But it
 will be good.

On Leonard -- As that washes over him.

NARRATOR (CONT'D)
 I love you, son.

LEONARD
 I love you...

Leonard tears up.

He looks down and wipes the tears from his eyes.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
 I love you, Dad.

He looks up.

The Narrator, of course, is gone.

Leonard looks around the room.

By the door is a tuxedo and a small box.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*If you stop for just a minute. You
 can hear the sounds of time
 passing:*

Leonard opens the box. Inside, there is a note. **"Why don't put on this wonderful suit and go to 38 Rue de Sèvres. Love, Dad."**

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Film flickering through a
 projector...*

HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Leonard, clean shaven, tying his bow tie.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Keys unlocking a door before
 discovering who's behind it.*

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Leonard, in his tuxedo, walking down the quiet Parisian street.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
*Or the silence that exists between
 a question being asked, and a
 question being answered. Who are
 you? And where? When? Are you in
 the theater now? At home? Are you
 happy? What do you regret? Who do
 you miss?*

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

Leonard approaches a cafe. It's the cafe where we originally met the Narrator. The cafe, we remember, where Leonard found...

Leonard walks toward the door, exiting frame.

Inside, we see something that he does not: Cecile, waiting tables.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
And what, exactly, is it that you
want?

FADE OUT.

THE END