

HENRY'S FINAL APPRECIATION

OF LIFE

script by
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FADE IN

EXT. BUILDING - DAY

A shaky documentary-like handheld shot TRACKS across a building's facade. We hear the operator cough a few times in the background and the camera vibrates in unison.

STRONG VOICE (v.o.)

Allan, are you ever going to start working with me here?

The TRACKING now comes to a stop and the focus blurs somewhat. After a few seconds the image clarifies again.

ALLAN (v.o.)

Calm down... I'm just checking the focus. OK.

The camera suddenly swings around to the right and we see a rather sullen-looking young man dressed in a black winter overcoat standing a few feet in front of the camera, looking directly into it. We can now tell that they are filming on the high walkway to the right of the UofT Department of English building.

YOUNG MAN

Like I said, this thing is due in just a few days. Ready?
(pause) ... No, you have to come closer.

ALLAN walks forward a few paces until the young man's head is near the top of the camera frame.

YOUNG MAN

OK.

He clears his throat and changes his posture. He then begins to slowly walk forward and the camera shakily TRACKS backward.

YOUNG MAN

To be, or not to be, aye, there's the point,
To die, to sleep, is that all? Aye, all.
No, to sleep, to dream, aye merry, there it goes,
For in that dream of death, when... we awake,
hey, what's that guy doing?

The young man's demeanor changes into a confused look as he stares off into the distance.

ALLAN (v.o.)

What? I don't think that's in the text, Daniel.

ALLAN continues to hold the camera on DANIEL for a few more seconds until finally turning it around again. Through ALLAN's frame we see in the distance a man climbing atop the ledge of the walkway. ALLAN suddenly stops moving - probably out of shock - and then lets the camera fall down to his side.

We finally break from the perspective of ALLAN's camera to see a closer shot of the man balancing himself upon the ledge. The texture of this shot is of noticeably higher quality. The man then turns his head to the side to look off into the distance at ALLAN and DANIEL.

- CUT TO A CLOSE-UP of the man, who we can now see clearly has a very despondent look upon his face.
- CUT TO A shot showing both ALLAN and DANIEL still standing there motionlessly, frozen by what they think they're seeing.
- CUT TO The previous CLOSE-UP of the man again. He now turns his head back to the front and looks down.
- CUT TO A behind-the-back shot of the man, leaping off of the ledge and out of frame. The camera now TRACKS forward a few feet before TILTING upward into the sky.
- DISSOLVE TO The shot is still of the sky now but in a different location. The camera TILTS downward again and we can now see the man's body lying on the pavement in the distance. We continue to TRACK forward until the body fills the majority of the frame.
- CUT TO A WIDE shot of the left side of the man's body, then the right side, then a CLOSE-UP of his head from above it. The body is lying face-down. The gradually-amplifying sound of feet running can now be heard.
- CUT TO A shot of ALLAN and DANIEL rushing up to the body. As they near it ALLAN stops completely and DANIEL slows down, hesitantly walking up to it. DANIEL then crouches down to check for the man's pulse.

DANIEL
Well, he was successful.

ALLAN (nervously)
Well... let's, let's call the police.

DANIEL moves over a few inches in order to reach into the man's coat pocket. He pulls out a rather hefty-looking brown wallet.

ALLAN
W...what the fuck are you doing?

DANIEL
I'm just kind of curious, that's all.

ALLAN
They'll find out that you had your fingerprints all over his wallet and..

DANIEL (interrupting)

Listen, I just feel like finding out a few things about this guy. And that's exactly what I'll tell them.

After a few tense seconds of staring DANIEL looks back down at the wallet.

CUT TO CLOSE-UP on the wallet as DANIEL opens it. We initially see a small photograph of the deceased man with his arm around a female companion as they sit on a park bench. DANIEL then turns that over to reveal a photograph of the man shaking hands with another man as they both smile into the camera. He then skips to the back of the wallet, which reveals the man's driver's license.

DANIEL

Hmm... Henry Harrington. Born February 1st, 1970 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. Height... 5 feet, 11 inches.

CUT TO Shot of ALLAN shaking his head impatiently as he listens to DANIEL run off these facts.

DANIEL (v.o.)

Weight... 152 pounds. Eye colour... blue.

ALLAN

...Happy now? Come on, let's call the police.

DANIEL

Poor Henry... must've had a rough life. (looking up at Allan now) ... Yeah, that's it.

DANIEL carefully places the wallet back into HENRY's coat and walks back toward ALLAN. As they walk farther out of frame, the camera TILTS down and moves into a CLOSE-UP of HENRY's head from above once again.

DISSOLVE TO EXT. PARK - DAY

In a similar scene to the initial photograph that DANIEL had looked at, HENRY is sitting down on a park bench with a female companion. They are looking forward and smiling. Suddenly a FLASH fills the screen.

HENRY (standing up)

This'll be a good one... I can sense it.

HENRY walks out of frame. After a few moments he walks back in with a Polaroid camera in hand. He returns to the bench and holds the photograph forward, shaking it gently in the air.

CUT TO CLOSE-UP on the photograph that HENRY is holding in his hand - the same photograph that DANIEL had seen in the wallet.

CUT TO A short montage of HENRY and his girlfriend walking around the city, smiling and just generally looking happy. This is a series of mostly TRACKING shots.

CUT TO EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

A TRACKING shot of HENRY as he walks down a sidewalk. He is dressed quite sharply and clearly has a very jovial expression on his face.

CUT TO A WIDE shot of HENRY walking up to a house. We can now see that he is carrying a briefcase.

CUT TO A shot of HENRY standing on the porch of the house, ringing the doorbell. After a few seconds a lady answers the door and HENRY begins talking to her.

CUT TO A CLOSE shot of the lady's arm, passing a few bills over. We see HENRY's hand accept the bills and the camera TILTS upward after this exchange to reveal HENRY's smiling face again. He says a few more words, then reaches down to close his briefcase and walks away.

CUT TO A short montage showing that same basic shot as above a few more times. We can clearly see that the arms are of different people as they're wearing different pieces of clothing and are shaped differently, etc.

DISSOLVE TO INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A behind-the-back TRACKING shot of HENRY walking into an apartment. We follow him through a hallway and then into a room. He stops suddenly and the camera moves to the side a few feet to reveal his girlfriend sleeping in a bed with another man.

EXT. WALKWAY - DAY

HENRY is walking and talking at the same time... he has a cell phone up to his ear. He begins to walk down a set of steps; however, he appears to slip and fall out of frame.

CUT TO HENRY lying on the ground below the steps, grasping at his right knee. Judging by his facial expressions, we can clearly see that he is in great pain.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

The camera TILTS down from a shot of the hospital's sign to reveal HENRY limping out through the doors, carrying a small bag in his hand. He is clearly still in great pain.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

CLOSE-UP on HENRY's face as he is lying down on his bed, staring up blankly at the ceiling. He then looks downward, toward his lower body.

CUT TO WIDE shot of HENRY's whole body as he is lying down on the bed. He lifts his right leg up and attempts to bend it; however, he has to let it fall down again as the pain is too much. He then turns over to grab one of the many bottles resting on his night table.

CUT TO CLOSE-UP on HENRY's shaking hand as he pours a bunch of pills into it. The camera follows the hand up as he angrily pops all of the pills into his mouth and falls back down to the bed again.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Once again, a TRACKING shot of HENRY as he walks down a sidewalk. He is still dressed in the same manner but his previously jovial demeanor has clearly been overtaken by a gloomier one and he now appears to grimace slightly each time that he takes a step.

CUT TO A WIDE shot of HENRY approaching a house - we can now clearly see that he is still limping. He is carrying a briefcase with him.

CUT TO A shot of HENRY standing on the porch of the house, ringing the doorbell. After a few seconds a lady answers the door and HENRY begins talking to her.

CUT TO A CLOSE shot of the lady shaking her head and then closing the door. This shot is then repeated a few more times montage-style but with different people and at different houses.

CUT TO HENRY lowering his head in disappointment, walking off of the porch of one last house.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We see a man sitting behind a desk, looking forward rather sternly. This is the same man who DANIEL saw in that second photograph, shaking hands with HENRY but decidedly less happy now.

CUT TO A shot of a still sullen-looking HENRY, sitting on the other side of the desk, looking at this man. He then nods his head slightly and stands up, carrying his briefcase.

CUT TO Shot of HENRY walking closer to the desk. He places his briefcase on the desk and the man takes it away. They then solemnly shake hands and HENRY begins to walk away, still with his limp.

CUT TO CLOSE-UP TRACKING shot of HENRY with quite a

despondent look on his face as he exits the office.

DISSOLVE TO EXT. WALKWAY - DAY

CLOSE-UP TRACKING shot of HENRY walking with basically the same despondent facial expression; we can see from the background that he is in a new location.

CUT TO WIDE SHOT of HENRY limping up to the edge of the walkway. He awkwardly begins to climb atop its ledge. We can now see that this is the same scene as in the beginning.

CUT TO A CLOSE-UP of HENRY, looking in the direction of the camera just as before.

CUT TO A shot of ALLAN and DANIEL, standing there motionlessly just as before. However, this time they both begin to shout and run toward HENRY.

ALLAN
HEY!

DANIEL
HEY! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?! GET DOWN FROM THERE!

CUT TO The CLOSE-UP of HENRY again. This time, instead of immediately jumping he stalls and some hesitation appears to be upon his face now.

CUT TO WIDE shot of ALLAN and DANIEL rushing up to HENRY. They stop a few feet away from him.

DANIEL
Come on, you don't really want to do that. Get down from there.

HENRY (looking back slightly)
Stop pretending to care.

DANIEL
Hey... we cared enough to run like hell over here to try to help you, right? I mean... we could've just watched you kill yourself.

After a few awkward seconds HENRY appears to smile slightly at that last remark. However, just as he begins to climb down from the ledge the camera PANS out of frame. It keeps PANNING until it comes back to the same point, but then the movement increases in speed until the image is a complete blur and suddenly...

CUT TO The CLOSE-UP of HENRY from before, when he still had that despondent look upon his face.

CUT TO The shot showing both ALLAN and DANIEL still standing there motionlessly, frozen by what they think they're seeing.

CUT TO The previous CLOSE-UP of HENRY again. He now turns
his head back to the front and looks down.

CUT TO The behind-the-back shot of HENRY again, leaping off
of the ledge and out of frame. HOLD on this shot for
a few seconds and..

FADE OUT
THE END