

East Side dogs shit only the best . . . Village dogs shit art . . . in London, the dogs don't shit at all . . . they're not permitted to, you know . . . I've always had the theory that there's a hidden underground passage in London where all the dogs crap . . .

(SAUL wipes his foot and finally his shoe is clean . . .)

I was born in London, you know . . . My father owned a delicatessen in Stepney Green . . . That's the Lower East Side of London . . . One day when I was six, my parents had an argument . . . My mother threw a pickled herring at Dad . . . It missed him, but splattered against the wall . . . I took one look at the herring on the wall and that's when I decided to become an abstract expressionist . . .

Annie Hall

United Artists (Produced by Jack Rollins and Charles H. Joffe), 1977

Screenplay by Woody Allen and Marshall Brickman
Directed by Woody Allen

Time: 1977

Place: Manhattan

Alvy Singer grew up in a Jewish family in Brooklyn, in a house under the roller coaster at Coney Island. Now forty, he's become a successful comedian and comedy writer. He's seen on television and recognized on the street, whether he likes it or not. He's "arrived" but is still looking for greater meaning in his life. Alvy navigates with highly developed defenses and well-cultivated neuroses.

This monologue opens the film, as Alvy looks back on

what were the best and worst of times during his love affair with Annie Hall. Shown in flashbacks, Alvy's romantic encounters with women prepared him to expect the worst. But he meets and falls in love with Annie, a refreshingly eccentric WASP in her twenties, from the middle-class Midwest. Annie's left Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin—land of frigid winters and baked hams at Christmas—to be a singer in New York—land of pastrami on rye, indoor tennis, and documentaries like *The Sorrow and the Pity* playing at revival movie houses.

Alvy and Annie enchant each other, but as the relationship develops, they find themselves pulled in conflicting directions.

ALVY

Start

There's an old joke. Uh, two elderly women are at a Catskills mountain resort, and one of 'em says: "Boy, the food at this place is really terrible." The other one says, "Yeah, I know, and such . . . small portions." Well, that's essentially how I feel about life. Full of loneliness and misery and suffering and unhappiness, and it's all over much too quickly. The—the other important joke for me is one that's uh, usually attributed to Groucho Marx, but I think it appears originally in Freud's wit and its relation to the unconscious. And it goes like this—I'm paraphrasing. Uh . . . "I would never wanna belong to any club that would have someone like me for a member." That's the key joke of my adult life in terms of my relationships with women. Tsch, you know, lately the strangest things have been going through my mind, 'cause I turned forty, tsch, and I guess I'm going through a life crisis or something, I don't know. I, uh . . . and I'm not worried about aging. I'm not one o' those characters, you know. Although I'm balding slightly on top, that's about

the worst you can say about me. I, uh, I think I'm gonna get better as I get older, you know? I think I'm gonna be the—the balding virile type, you know, as opposed to say the, uh, distinguished gray, for instance, you know? 'Less I'm neither o' those two. Unless I'm one o' those guys with saliva dribbling out of his mouth who wanders into a cafeteria with a shopping bag screaming about socialism.

(sighing)

Annie and I broke up and I—I still can't get my mind around that. You know, I—I keep sifting the pieces o' the relationship through my mind and—and examining my life and tryin' to figure out where did the screw-up come, you know, and a year ago we were . . . tsch, in love. You know, and-and-and . . . And it's funny, I'm not—I'm not a morose type. I'm not a depressive character. I—I—I, uh—

(laughing)

—you know, I was a reasonably happy kid, I guess. I was brought up in Brooklyn during World War II.

END

The Goodbye Girl

Warners/Rastar (Produced by Ray Stark), 1977

Screenplay by Neil Simon

Directed by Herbert Ross

Time: 1977

Place: New York City

Paula, an out-of-work dancer in her thirties, and her daughter, Lucy, ten, live in an apartment in New York City. Paula's live-in boyfriend, Tony, has recently deserted them and moved to California. He sublet the apartment without Paula's knowledge. When the new subletter, Eliot Garfield, arrives, Paula reluctantly lets him live with her and Lucy.

Eliot, in his thirties, is an actor from Chicago who has moved to New York to play Richard III Off Broadway.

One evening, on her way home from dance class, Paula has her purse stolen. After dinner she explains to Eliot that she's strapped for money and gamely asks to borrow some. Eliot responds generously, offering to pay all living expenses until she gets a job. Paula, suspicious, asks him what he wants in return. When Eliot says, "Just be nice to me," Paula misinterprets his remark and tells him to go to hell. This is Eliot's response:

ELIOT

Will you listen very, very carefully to me? Just for once— This may be the last time I ever talk to you. Not everyone in this world is after your magnificent body, lady. In the first place, it's not so magnificent. It's fair, but it ain't keepin' me up nights, ya know? I don't even think you're very pretty. Maybe if you smiled once and awhile, okay, but I don't want you to do anything against your religion. And you are *not* the only person in this city ever to get dumped on. I myself am a recent dumpee. I am a dedicated actor, Paula, ya know? I am dedicated to my art and my craft. I value what I do. And because of a mentally arthritic director, I am about to play the second greatest role in the history of the English-speaking theater like a double order of fresh California fruit salad. When I say "nice" I mean "nice"—ya know, decent, fair. I deserve it, because I'm a nice, decent and fair person. I don't wanna jump on your bones. I don't even want to see you in the morning. But I'll tell you what I do like about you, Paula: Lucy. Lucy's your best part. Lucy is worth puttin' up with *you* for. So here is fourteen dollars for the care and feeding of that terrific kid. *You* get zippity doo-dah. You want any money? Borrow it from your ten-year-old daughter.