

In the opening scenes Olive Hoover, her father Richard, her mother Sheryl and her uncle Frank are introduced. Olive wants to take part in the children's beauty contest Little Miss Sunshine. Richard wants to sell his "Refuse To Lose" program.

Michael Arndt

Little Miss Sunshine

2 INT. BASEMENT REC ROOM – DAY

A seven-year-old girl sits watching the show intently.

This is OLIVE. She is big for her age and slightly plump.

She has frizzy hair and wears black-rimmed glasses. She studies the show very earnestly.

5 Then, using a remote, she FREEZES the image.

Absently, she holds up one hand and mimics the waving style of Miss America. She

REWINDS the tape and starts all over.

Again, Miss America hears her name announced, and once again breaks down in tears --
overwhelmed and triumphant.

10 RICHARD (V.O.): There's two kinds of people in this world -- Winners... and Losers.

3 INT. CLASSROOM – DAY

RICHARD (45) stands at the front of a generic community college classroom --
cinderblock walls, industrial carpeting.

He wears pleated khaki shorts, a golf shirt, sneakers. He moves with the stocky, stiff-legged
15 gait of a former athlete.

His peppy, upbeat demeanor just barely masks a seething sense of insecurity and
frustration. MUSIC continues underneath.

RICHARD: If there's one thing you take away from the nine weeks we've spent here, it
should be this: Winners and Losers. What's the difference?

20 Richard turns and clicks through a Power Point presentation, projected behind him, that bullet-lists his
key points.

RICHARD (con't): Winners see their dreams come true. Winners see what they want,
they go out and they get it. They don't hesitate. They don't complain. They don't make
excuses. And they don't give up. Losers don't get what they want. They hesitate. They
25 complain. They make excuses. And they give up. On themselves and their dreams.

Richard puts down his remote for the big finale. In the dim half-light, it's a hushed,
dramatic moment.

RICHARD (con't): Inside each of you -- at the very core of your being -- is a Winner
waiting to be awakened... and unleashed upon the world. With my Nine Step "Refuse
30 To Lose" program, you now have the tools, the know-how, the insights you need to put

your losing habits behind you and make your dreams come true. No hesitating! No complaining! No excuses! I want you to go out into the world... and be Winners! Thank you!

Big smile.

35 REVERSE ANGLE -- There are twenty STUDENTS in a classroom that could seat one hundred. They CLAP half-heartedly.

Then there's an awkward moment when everyone gathers their stuff. No one says anything. Chairs SCRAPE the floor.

[...]

40 **7 EXT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR – DAY**

Sheryl strides anxiously down a hospital corridor, fingering a small cross on her necklace, checking room numbers. She finds the room she's looking for. As she tries to enter, a DOCTOR emerges. They nearly collide.

DOCTOR: Ms. Hoover?

45 (Sheryl nods)

Your brother's fine...

Sheryl exhales -- hugely relieved.

8 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM – DAY

In a wheelchair, parked against a wall, is Sheryl's brother, FRANK, also middle-aged. His 50 wrists are wrapped in bandages.

With empty eyes, he listens to the muted VOICE of the Doctor coming from the hallway.

DOCTOR (O.S.): ...Keep him away from sharp objects: knives, scissors... If you have medications -- depressants -- in your house, keep them secured...

9 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR – DAY

55 Sheryl listens to the Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'd prefer to keep him, but...

SHERYL: I know, the insurance...

She shakes her head and sighs.

Annotations:

¹ INT. – interior 1 REC ROOM – recreation room

² the show – here Miss America Contest Television Show

¹⁰ V.O. – voice over

¹² generic community college classroom – here typical college classroom

^{22/28} con't – continued

⁴⁰ EXT. – exterior

⁵² O.S. – off screen