

Hero's Journey Analysis – "Little Miss Sunshine"

Step 1 Ordinary World

Chapter 1

Girl is watching a beauty pageant – imitating

Greg Kinnear – Self Help "guru" – gestures with his hands
– hardly anyone in the room – a loser talking about
winning

Teenage son – working out – keeping track of something on
a char

Grandfather snorting coke or something

First thing we see of Toni Colette – she's smoking, says
she's not smoking – tension with the husband – "Only one
who can take him"

Steve Carell – looking mournful in a wheelchair

Titles

4.13

No sharp objects – slashed wrists

So glad you're still here – That's make one of us

Chapter 2 5:30

She takes him home – he doesn't want to talk

Not thrilled about sharing with the teenage son

6.59

Olive rehearsing with grandfather

Husband arrives home. Did Sam Grossman call?

Is this darn book deal done?

7.58

Tension btw husband and wife

Son is not talking
Because of Nietzsche

Chapter 3

Dinner — 9.00

Who do you hang out with

Richard sits down — nothing to talk about. Gets up

Dwayne has stopped speaking

Wants to become a test pilot

- taken a vow of silence

What happened to arms

How is routine?

Grandfather complains about chicken

Got kicked out of Sunset manor

9 months

Tremendous discipline

The 9 steps

Everyone thinks he's a dick

How did it happen?

Tried to kill himself

Father not happy

Fell in love with a guy

Grandfather doesn't approve

Silly. Another word for it.

Lover left him for Larry Sugarman

Larry Sugarman got award

Richard says he gave up on himself

Step 2 Call to Adventure

Chapter 4

16:06 She has made the state final of Little Miss
Sunshine in Redondo Beach

This Sunday

Sister is not going – they can't take her

Step 3 Refusal of the Call

We can't do it says Richard

Packing her gear

You promised

If I had a little help bringing it in

Seed money

Can't fly – can't afford it

Grandfather has to go – he coached her

She can't drive a stick shift

Step 4 Meeting with the Mentor

Don't really see one.

Step 5 Crossing the Threshold

Richard says he'll drive the bus

Dwayne and Frank have to go with them

Dwayne will go

Dwayne will only go if she agrees to let him go to Flight
School

But I'm not going to have any fun

Richard asks if she's going to win

Yep. We're going to California

20.42

20.45

Comes to bed
Don't kill yourself tonight

Welcome to hell

Step 6 Tests, Allies & Enemies

21.25

Chapter 5

Music movement

Car driving down the highway

New world – a literal journey

But it's not a happy crew

Girl has headphones on

I'm so fucking tired

Mentor

Fuck a lot of women

What happened at Sunset Manor

Stared snorting heroin

Don't you start taking that shit

The intervention failed

Stuck with Mr Happy

24.57 Breakfast scene

This stage of the journey very typically in this sort of place

They order

Richard says he'll get fat if she eats ice cream

They gang up and Olive eats her ice cream – a defeat for the father

Tries to call the guy again

600 miles of driving today, 200 tomorrow

29.10

She tries to drive the Kombi (foreshadowed that she couldn't)

He breaks the clutch

They have to order the part – Thursday

As long as you start in 3rd you don't need a clutch

They have to push the Kombi together – the first time the family has really come together.

Outstanding.

Was that fun?
32:30

More travel

Playing the car

33.15
Talks about Stan Grossman

Frank not interested

Sarcasm

I feel sorry for you

What a loser he is

Tension btw the two of them

Stan Grossman calls. Can't hear him.

How did we do?
35.11

Father tells Frank to get some porn

Runs into his ex lover 36.14

As the porn is going through the checkout

Humiliating

Richard says he can swing by Scotsdale

We're fucked 38:30

Where's Olive? On the pad.

They come back and pick her up

She has to jump on

Father comes up to console his son
I'm proud of you

The healing is progressing
41:05

They come and stay at the motel

Going to knock on doors at 7am

What a fucking nightmare
We have to talk

Richard and Cheryl fight

Dwayne happy they're fighting over the 9 steps

Little bit of rehearsal btw Olive and grandfather

Am I pretty

I don't want to be a loser

Emotional climax there (ahead of his death)
45.22

Richard and Cheryl are all fought out

Richard says he's going to "fix this"

Car won't start
(Bit of a sign that he's not part of the collective)

He hires a scooter – Nazi helmet
46.57

Cheryl has a smoke

Grandfather pulls out his heroin kit

He arrives at the hotel in Scotsdale

Hello Stan

It's not the program. It's you.

This is it. No-one bought it. It's time to move on.

This is what the 9 steps are all about

He rides back on his scooter.

49:56 Mum Dad Grandpa won't wake up

Ambulance

Hospital

All waiting around

Family meeting

Whatever happens, we're a family

Go Hug, Mom (Humour and emotion)

I'm sorry. We did everything we could. 51:54

Bereavement Counsellor

They live in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Taking a body across state lines

Not allowed to

They won't let them leave the body there

They go down, look at the body

The body has become the prize

We'll go to Little Miss Sunshine next year 56.03

We've come 700 miles

Puts forms in the bin

Not going to leave him here.

We're taking him with us

They steal the body 57.58

They get away
59.26

What's going to happen to grandpa?

Is there a heaven, Uncle Frank?
Olive thinks there is one
Will he get in?
Yes.

Guy cuts them off in traffic
Hits horn

Keeps honking

Motorcycle cop pulls them over

"Everyone pretend to be normal" 1:01:00

Do you have something in your trunk?

But instead of finding the body
His attention is taken by the porn
Fellow Traveller
Until he sees the gay porn
Not what you expect
Fabulous example of defying expectations

1:04 Dwayne can't see the letter
he's colour blind
And that means the end of his dream
Dwayne has a total meltdown
1:06:12

Fuck – his first words

The emotional low
He says he's not going any further

Cheryl tries to talk to him
You're not my family
I hate you
You're fucking losers

Can someone stay with him?
Frank offers
But Cheryl says no.
Olive goes down to talk to him

I apologise
I didn't really mean them

He misses the hotel

Through the gate

I'm not turning back

You can't do this

1:12

Door falls off

They are there

Frank runs in

Registration ended at 3

Just want her to compete

He gets down on bended knee

You don't know what we've been through

Kirby enters them into the system

1:14

She meets Miss California

Do you like ice cream?

Is there a funeral home around here? 1:15

Dressing room

Big ad for Larry Sugarman's best seller

Dwayne says Let's get out of here

Undertakers come to get the body

1:17

Personal effects

Welcome to the LMS pageant

1:18

The other girls come out

Typical

Precocious

Olive nervous

Pigeon toed

Olive looks at herself in the mirror

On the end of the pier

1:21:37

Says that he wishes that he could sleep until he was 18

Proust – Total loser

Gets to the end of his life

All those years he suffered they were the best years of his life

All the happy years, total waste

Think of the suffering you're going to miss

Fuck everything

He'll find a way to fly.

Glad you're talking again

You're not nearly as stupid as you look

Want to go back

Not really

The resurrection

The moment we've been waiting

The talent competition

1:23

One of the kids does dazzling gym moves

Frank and Dwayne go in

And then come straight out

1:25

Can I talk to you for a second?

Doesn't want her to go on?

We're not in Albuquerque any more

I don't want Olive doing this

Father and son don't want her to do it

She's not a beauty queen

Olive hears it

Got to let Olive be Olive.

If you don't want to do this

Totally fine

It's time
1:26

The four of them rush in.

1:28
Olive goes up

I'd like to dedicate this to my grandpa
Where is your grandpa
In the trunk of our car

Pulls her pants off

People walk out

But the family stands up and claps

(This is quite like the end of Strictly Ballroom

Father tackles the MC

Get your daughter off this stage

Sharing the Elixir

Father goes on stage
And starts dancing

Frank gets up

Dwayne gets up

Cheryl gets up
1:32

Cop says
You can leave as long as you never enter another beauty
pageant in California

They push together again

Goes past the woman in the car

Horn goes off
1:35

Step 7 Approaching the inmost cave

Step 8 The Ordeal

Step 9 Seizing the sword

Step 10 The Road Home

Step 11 The Resurrection

Step 12 Sharing the Elixir