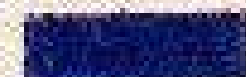
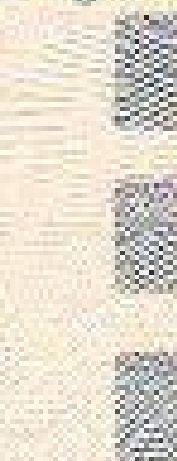
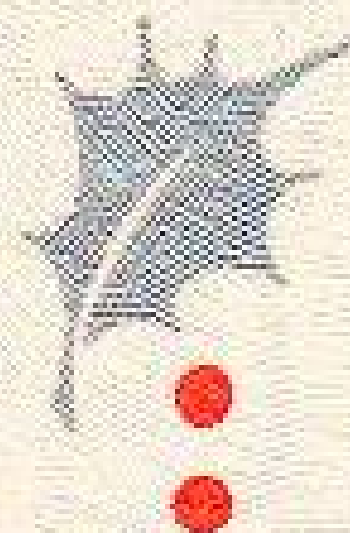
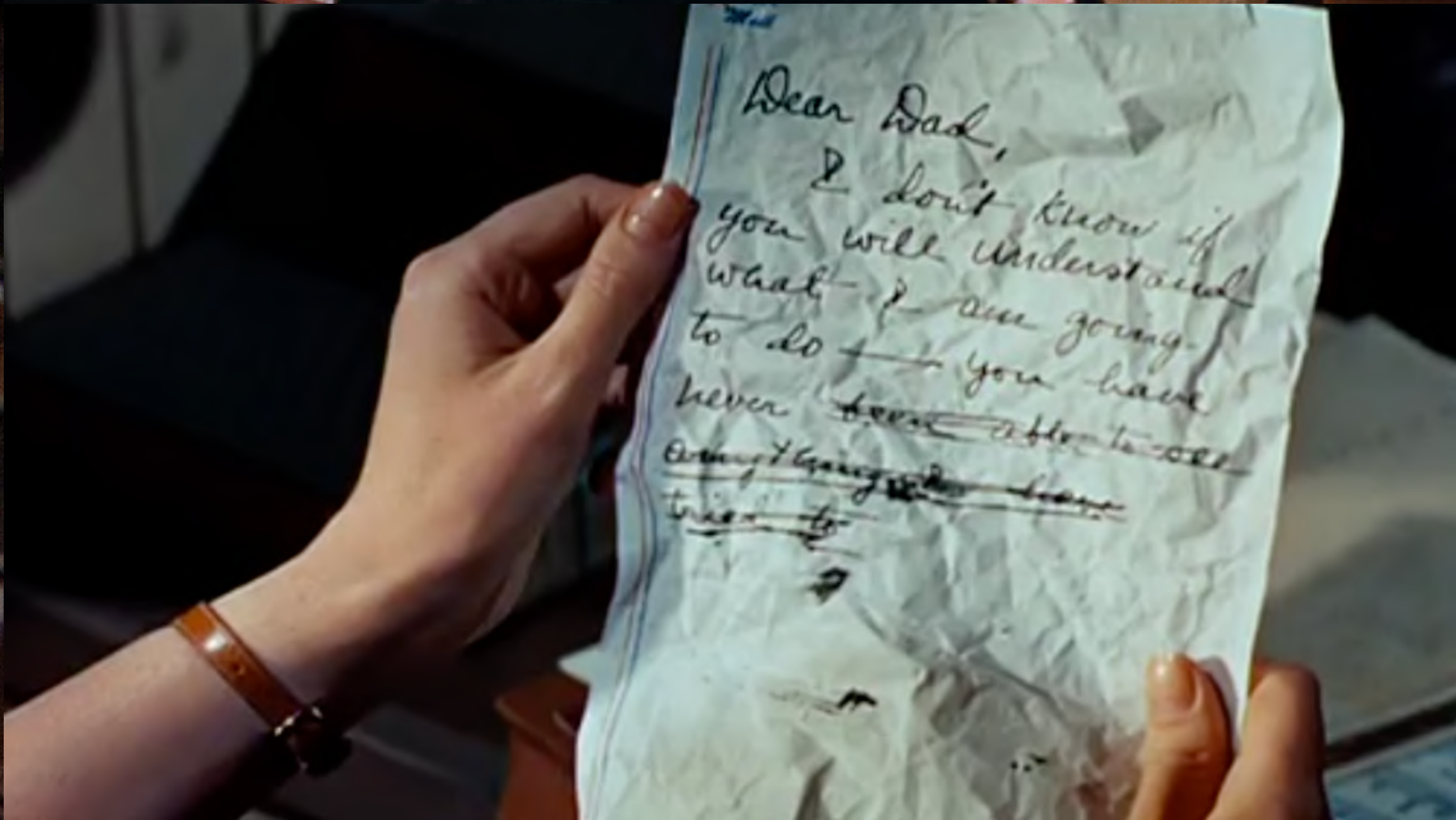


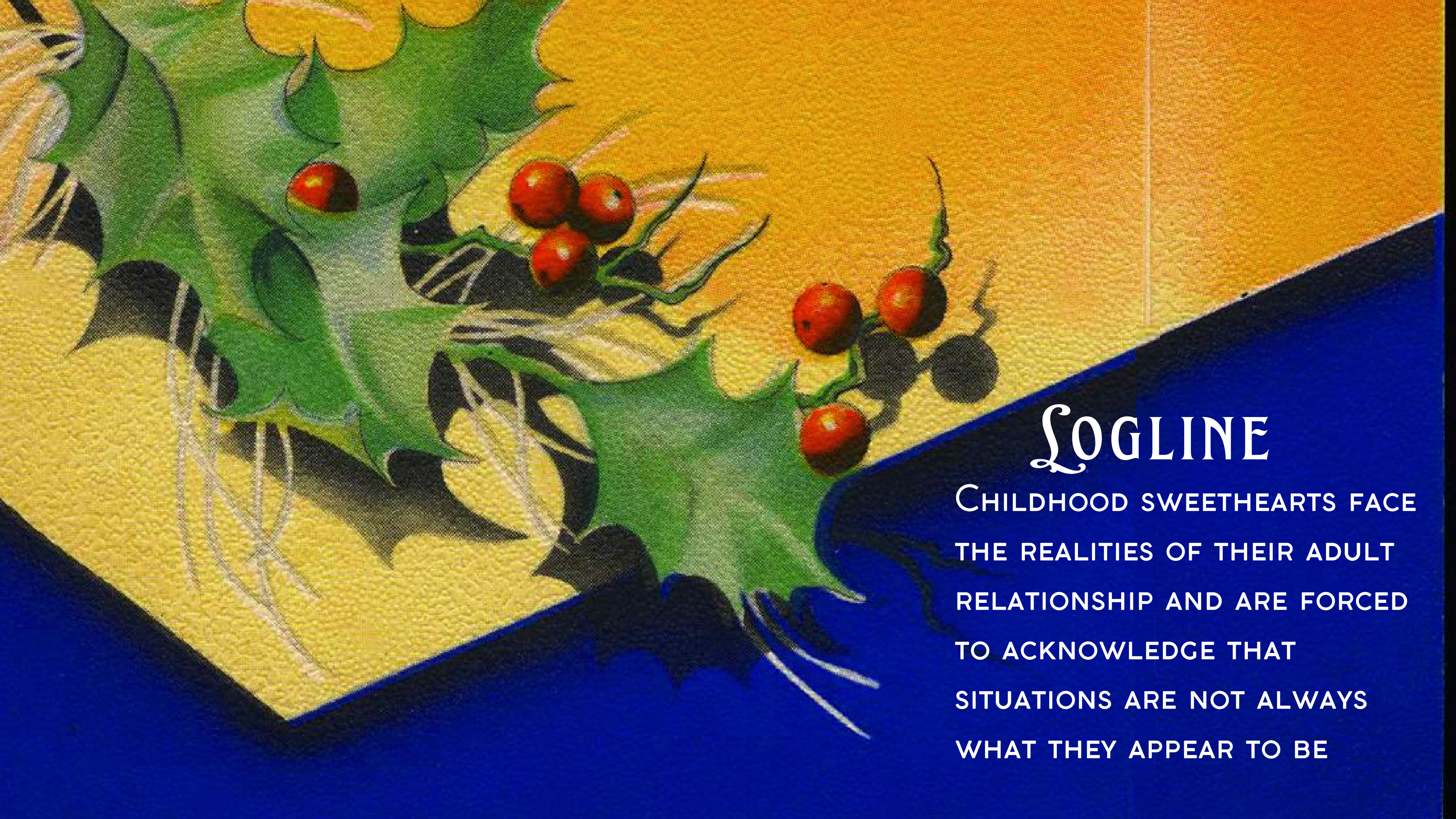
HEAVEN

AND

NATURE

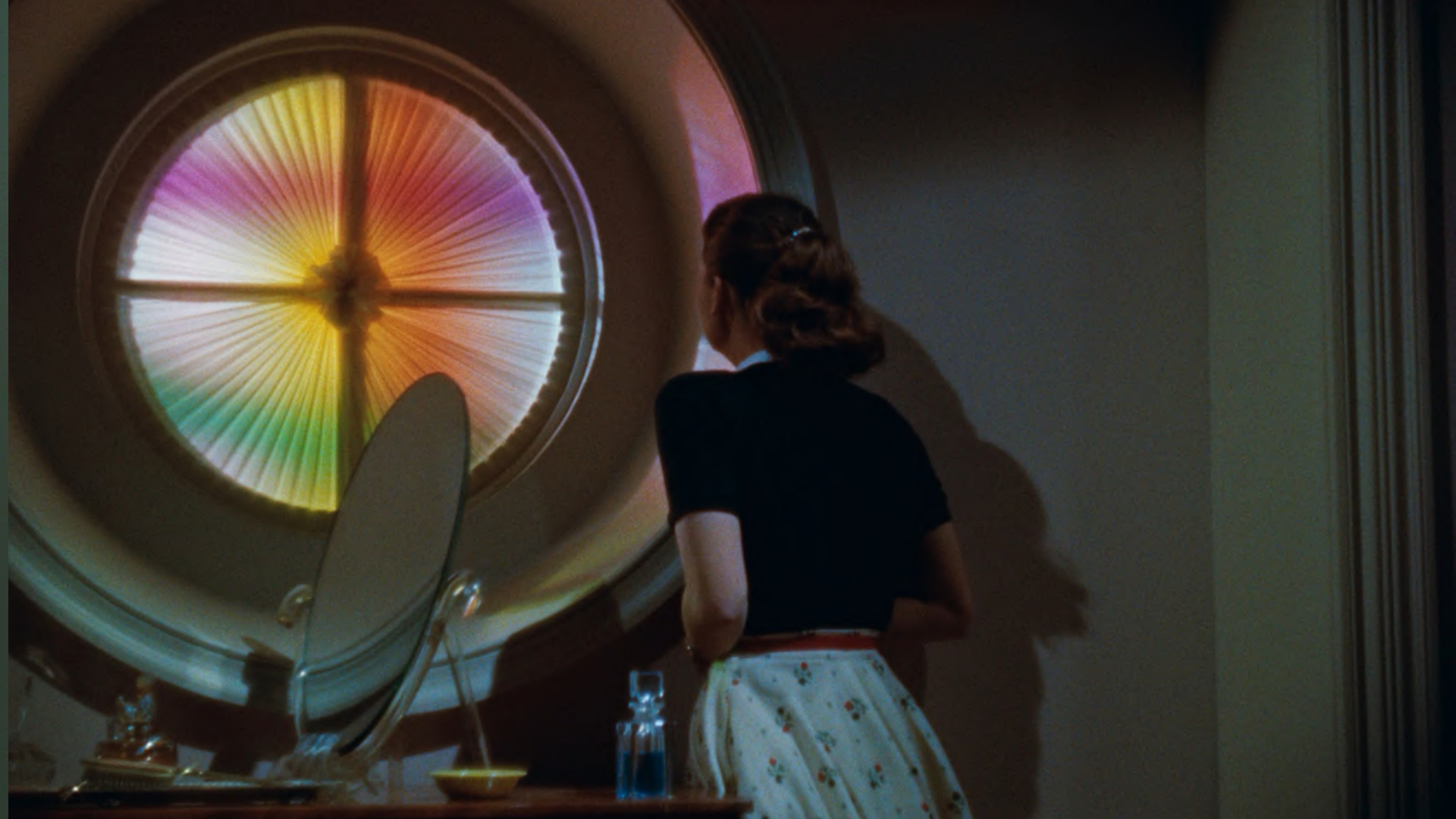







LOGLINE

CHILDHOOD SWEETHEARTS FACE THE REALITIES OF THEIR ADULT RELATIONSHIP AND ARE FORCED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SITUATIONS ARE NOT ALWAYS WHAT THEY APPEAR TO BE



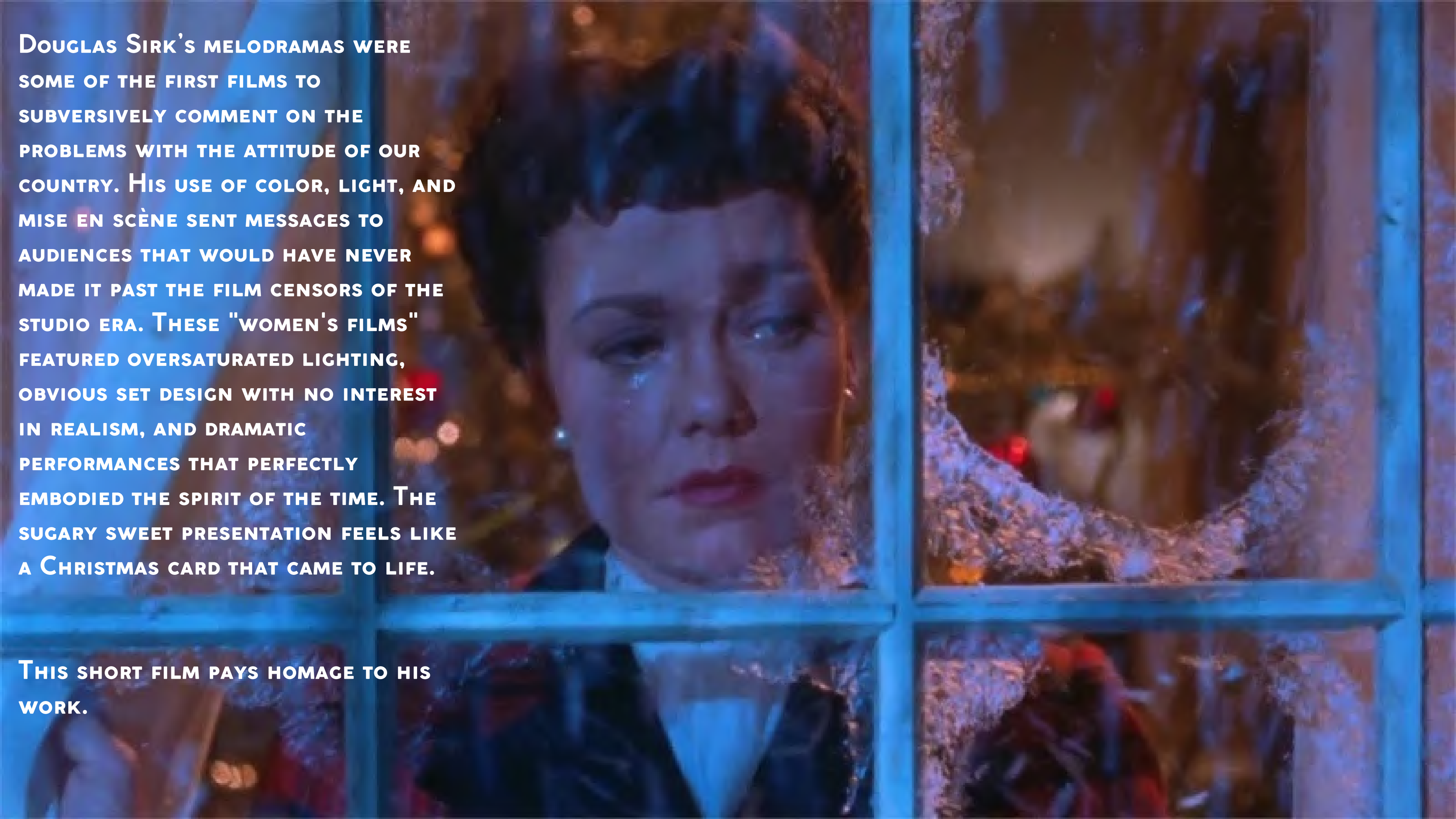


**OUR STORY TAKES PLACE
IN THE LATE 1950s.
CHRISTMAS CAPITALISM IS
IN FULL EFFECT, AND IMAGE
IS EVERYTHING. THIS
PERIOD OF ECONOMIC
PROSPERITY IS PAIRED WITH
STIFLING CONSERVATIVE
VALUES READY TO
STEAMROLL ANYONE WHO
DARES TO DEVIATE FROM
SOCIAL NORMS.**

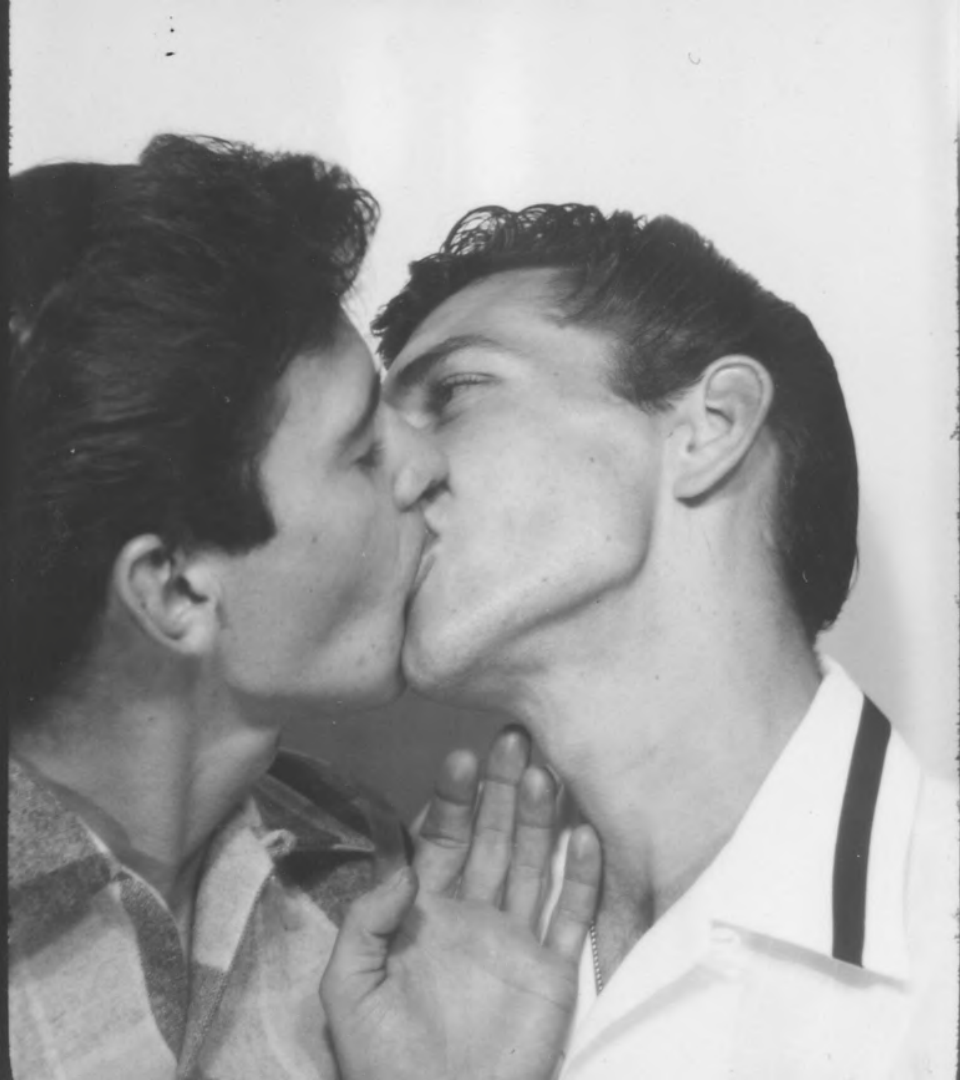
**MODERN NOSTALGIA
REMEMBERS THE HOLIDAYS OF
POST WAR AMERICA AS THE PEAK
OF CHEER AND GLAMOUR. WE
CONTINUE TO SEE A TOXIC
OBSESSION WITH THIS TIME THAT
NEVER ACKNOWLEDGES THE
ROTTEN CORE OF SUFFERING
LOOMING BENEATH PERFECT PRESENTATION.
HOW MANY SEEMINGLY HAPPY PEOPLE
SUFFERED FROM AN INABILITY TO ESCAPE THE
PRESSURES OF THEIR CIRCUMSTANCES?**

DOUGLAS SIRK'S MELODRAMAS WERE SOME OF THE FIRST FILMS TO SUBVERSIVELY COMMENT ON THE PROBLEMS WITH THE ATTITUDE OF OUR COUNTRY. HIS USE OF COLOR, LIGHT, AND MISE EN SCÈNE SENT MESSAGES TO AUDIENCES THAT WOULD HAVE NEVER MADE IT PAST THE FILM CENSORS OF THE STUDIO ERA. THESE "WOMEN'S FILMS" FEATURED OVERSATURATED LIGHTING, OBVIOUS SET DESIGN WITH NO INTEREST IN REALISM, AND DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES THAT PERFECTLY EMBODIED THE SPIRIT OF THE TIME. THE SUGARY SWEET PRESENTATION FEELS LIKE A CHRISTMAS CARD THAT CAME TO LIFE.

THIS SHORT FILM PAYS HOMAGE TO HIS WORK.





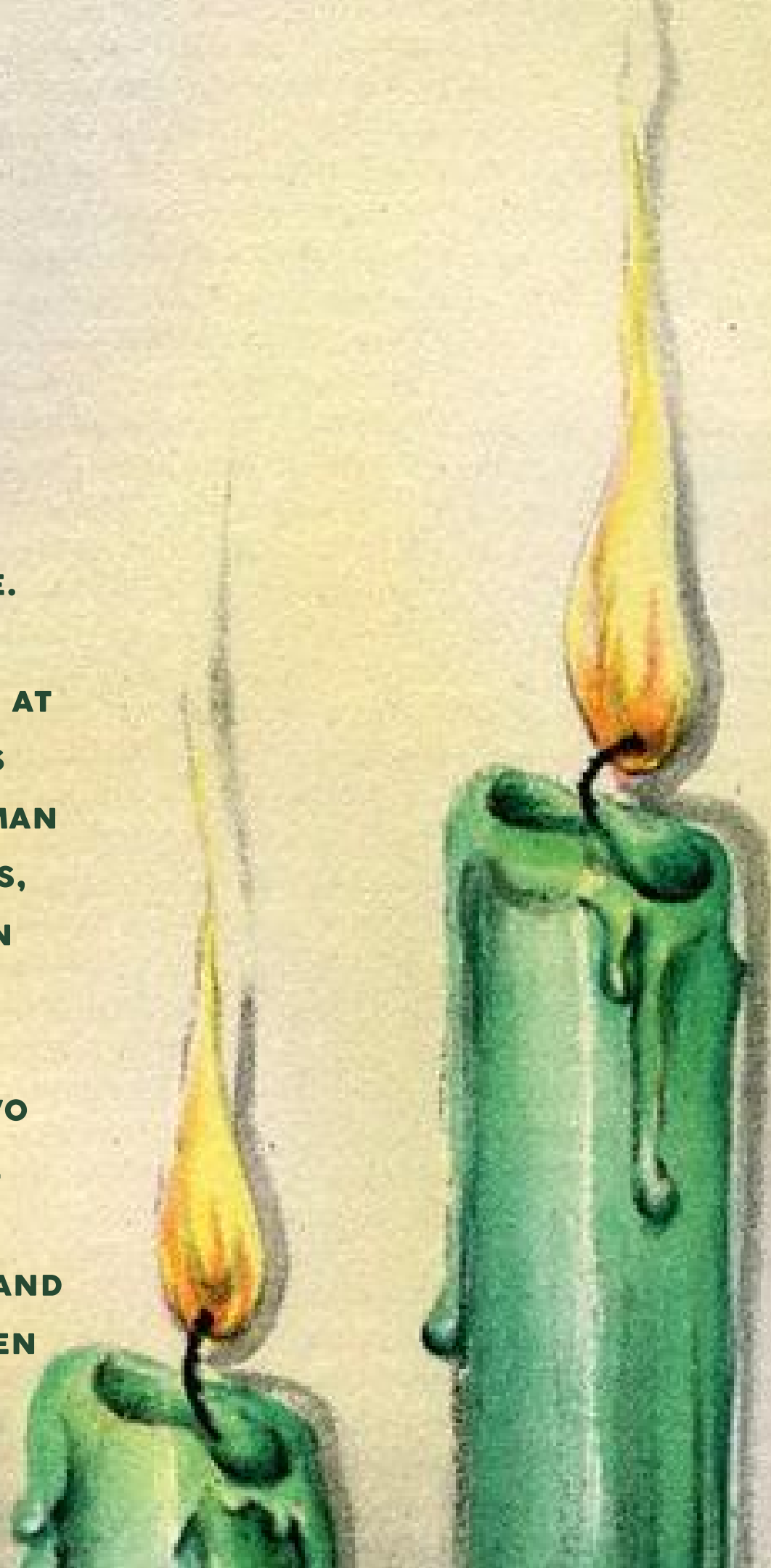


A Friendly Christmas Greeting

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS FILM ARE INSPIRED BY REAL STORIES AND IMAGES OF GAY MEN OF THE TIME.

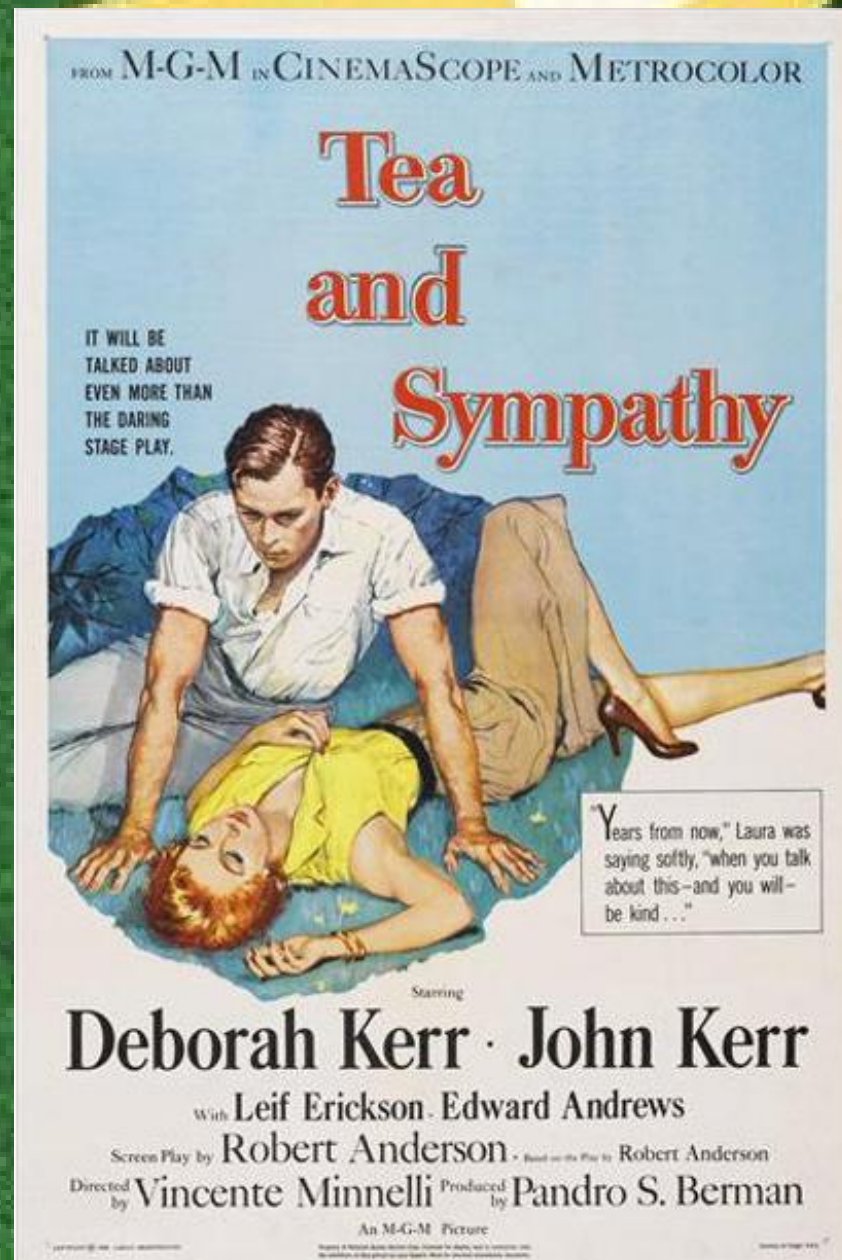
THE FIRST IS DAVID DOWNS, AN ACTING PROFESSOR AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY WHO DOCUMENTED HIS LIFE AND EMOTIONAL STRUGGLES AS A YOUNG GAY MAN IN THE EARLY 1960s THROUGH DAILY DIARY ENTRIES, LETTERS, AND PHOTOGRAPHS THAT ARE NOW HELD IN THE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES.

THE SECOND SOURCE OF INSPIRATION ARE THESE TWO PHOTOS, CURRENTLY IN THE ONE ARCHIVES AT THE USC LIBRARIES. BOTH IMAGES WERE TAKEN IN A PHOTO BOOTH IN 1953, FEATURING ROBERT BLOCK AND JJ BELANGER. THEY ARE JUST TWO OF THE MANY MEN WHO LIVED THEIR LIVES IN STOLEN MOMENTS OF PRIVACY.





INSPIRATION



MERRY CHRISTMAS

KATHLEEN

KATHLEEN IS A SMALL-TOWN GIRL WHO HAS ALWAYS HAD REASONABLE DREAMS. HER HOUSE WILL BE PERFECTLY MAINTAINED WITH DINNER ON THE TABLE FOR HER HUSBAND AND TWO PERFECT CHILDREN. SHE HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE NICEST GIRL ON THE BLOCK, WILLING TO OFFER A HELPING HAND AND A SMILE.

SHE PRIDES HERSELF ON HER APPEARANCE, AND HAS ALWAYS TRIED TO STRETCH HER RESOURCES AS FAR AS SHE CAN WITH HER CLOTHING AND GROOMING.

WHILE COLLEGE WASN'T AN AVAILABLE OPTION TO HER, SHE WAS A TOP STUDENT IN HIGH SCHOOL AND HAS HER EYES OPEN TO THE WORLD AROUND HER. SHE HAS KNOWN MARTIN SINCE THEY WERE CHILDREN, AND SEES HIM AS THE TICKET TO THE LIFE SHE ALWAYS HOPED FOR.





HAPPY NEW YEAR

MARTIN

MARTIN HAS ALWAYS HELD HIMSELF TO THE HIGHEST STANDARDS. HE DID ALL THE THINGS HE WAS SUPPOSED TO DO, FROM BEING A BOY SCOUT TO BECOMING CLASS PRESIDENT. HE ALWAYS LOVED ART, SPECIFICALLY PAINTING, BUT WENT TO COLLEGE FOR A SENSIBLE ECONOMICS DEGREE.

HIS PERFECTIONISM HAS ALWAYS BEEN A WAY TO KEEP PEOPLE AT ARMS LENGTH, AVOIDING ANY CHANCE FOR THEM TO CRITIQUE OR SEE BELOW THE SURFACE. DEEP DOWN, HE KNOWS THAT HE HAS FEELINGS FOR OTHER MEN.

IN COLLEGE HE HAS FOSTERED A SECRET RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FRIEND, JERRY, AND TRIES TO IGNORE THE REALITIES OF FORBIDDEN LOVE. HIS RESPONSIBLE SIDE KEEPS HIM COMING BACK TO KATHLEEN AND HIS EXPECTED LIFE PATH.







MRS. CARTER

MRS. CARTER IS ALWAYS READY FOR GOSSIP AND A COCKTAIL. YOU WILL NEVER HEAR HER TELL SOMEONE TO CALL HER BY HER FIRST NAME, THE ROLE OF WIFE AND MOTHER IS ALL SHE HAS LEFT.

SHE HAS UPHELD HER END OF THE BARGAIN, RAISING MARTIN AND TAKING CARE OF THE HOME WHILE HER HUSBAND IS OUT DOING WHO KNOWS WHAT. ANY SUSPICIONS SHE MIGHT HAVE ABOUT MARTIN AND HIS SPECIAL FRIENDSHIPS ARE DROWNED OUT WITH THE SOUNDS OF THE RECORD PLAYER AND THE TASTE OF HER THIRD MARTINI.

LIFE DIDN'T WORK OUT THE WAY SHE PLANNED, BUT SHE'S MAKING THE MOST OF IT.



