

sent p.

queer as folk

EPISODE 20

Paul Hanel

Paul Hanel

Written by:
J & J

Penultimate Pre-Production Draft 02-07-2001

FADE IN:

1 INT. PHOTO SHOOT - DAY 1

FLASH! A GORGEOUS NUDE GOD is being photographed at a photo shoot. FLASH! He's posing, flexing -- FLASH! That's good, that's great -- now, look at the camera -- FLASH! Now, fuck the camera -- FLASH! FLASH! That's it! Just the right pose is eventually captured for:

THE POSTER FOR THE KING OF BABYLON CONTEST

One of which is up inside:

2 INT. LIBERTY DINER - NIGHT 2

There's a lot of excitement here, a lot of buzz, cuz -- tonight's the night! We find MICHAEL, EMMETT, TED and BLAKE, finishing dinner. JUSTIN's bussing tables.

DEBBIE *

Can you believe it's been a year already?

JUSTIN

Since what?

EMMETT *

(Duh! Pointing to a poster)
The King of Babylon Contest.

MICHAEL

It always seems like such a big deal at the time -- then a week later, you can't even remember who won.

TED

Angel Escobar. Five-ten, one-seventy-five, twenty-eight inch waist, nine-inch cock, a bronze god.

EMMETT

You were paying attention!

BLAKE

Should I be jealous?

Ted answers him with a sweet kiss. Emmett and Michael give each other the eye.

EMMETT

(sickened)

I think I'll skip dessert.

BRIAN comes in and squeezes in next to Michael, playfully tickling him to move over. *

BRIAN
Who cares about a bunch of steroid gym bunnies dancing around in their jocks?

DEBBIE *

Considering you fucked all of last year's contestants -- you.

JUSTIN
God, who would do that?

MICHAEL
Fuck Brian?

JUSTIN
No, strip in front of all those people.

TED
For a thousand bucks and a trip to the Bahamas? A lot of guys.

EMMETT
Especially, when you're on drugs, you'll do anything.
(then, to Blake:)
Oops. Sorry.

Off this we go out to: *

3 EXT. LIBERTY DINER - NIGHT 3

As Michael, Brian, Emmett, Ted and Blake walk down Liberty Ave.

TED *

(putting a protective arm around Blake) *

Blake acknowledges his addiction and he's working on it. *

BLAKE *

I'm going to meetings at the Gay and Lesbian Center. *

EMMETT *

My, aren't we the busy little bee! *

BRIAN
We'll all meet in front of Babylon.
Ten o'clock!

*
*
*

MICHAEL
(begging off)
I don't know. I don't think David's
going to want to go -- It's kind of
late --

*
*

BRIAN
He's probably got his teeth in a glass
by then.

MICHAEL
He happens to get up at six every
morning to run five miles -- while
you're still in bed.

BRIAN
I find it's where I get my best cardio
workout.

MICHAEL
(defensive)
And if I really wanted him to go, he
would.

BRIAN
Uh-huh.

MICHAEL
It's true!

BRIAN
(a challenge, a dare)
All right. Then make sure he's there.

*

MICHAEL
(standing up to him)
All right -- I will.

*
*
*

EMMETT
(to Ted, ignoring Blake)
You coming?

TED
Babylon isn't exactly a drug-free
environment.

*

BRIAN
He's a big boy. Why not let him
decide?

BLAKE
I'm fine. Really.

Ted looks at Blake for a beat, then:

TED
We're in.

EMMETT
(less than enthused)
Hooray. Only it's going to feel more
like couples night, since I'm the only
single boy left.

BRIAN
(raising his hand)
'Scuse me? What the fuck do you think
I am?

Just then, Justin comes bounding out of the diner runs to
catch up, links up with Brian -- literally.

JUSTIN
So! We're going to Babylon? *

On Brian's glare:

4 INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 4

DAVID, wearing a pair of very old, very tight, torn jeans, is
sorting dirty laundry. Michael, just returned, is brushing
his teeth.

MICHAEL
Those jeans are all torn and too tight --

DAVID
What?

Michael holds up a finger, "time out" -- goes into the
bathroom, spits, returns.

MICHAEL
(again)
Those jeans are all torn and too tight.
(totally turned on)
Why haven't I seen you in them before?

DAVID
I only wear them when I run out of
clean clothes.

MICHAEL
You must stop doing laundry
immediately.

Michael grabs David by the waist.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
Listen, how about going out? Tonight's
the King of Babylon Contest.

DAVID
Michael, I'm too old for that shit.

MICHAEL
No you're not.

DAVID
Yeah, I am --

MICHAEL
If the guys saw how incredibly sexy you
look in those, I bet they'd stop--

He stops himself. *

DAVID
You bet they'd stop what? *

MICHAEL
Oh, nothing. Never mind. I shouldn't
have said anything --

DAVID
No, tell me. What were you going to
say?

MICHAEL
(reluctantly)
They'd stop making all those jokes
about adult diapers. And denture
cream. And penile implants.

DAVID
Penile implants --?

MICHAEL
But like you said, you're too old for
that shit.

Michael, 02/07/2001

Michael leaves, hopes this has done the trick. David
continues sorting, catches himself in the mirror-- damn if
Michael isn't right. Not bad, Doc!

*

5 EXT. BABYLON - NIGHT

5

As Babylonians pour into the club, Emmett, Ted & Blake and
Brian & Justin wait outside.

*

BRIAN
(impatiently)
I knew they wouldn't come. Michael
probably had to give the old man a
prostate massage.

*

EMMETT
There are worse ways to spend a
Saturday night --

MICHAEL (V.O.)
Hey, boys--!

*

*

The guys turn, see Michael and David approach.

-

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Sorry we're late -- had to wait for
David to finish doing his thousand sit-
ups.

*

Everyone's vision RAMPS to David's jeans.

EMMETT
David, you look-- great!
(flustered)
I mean, great to see you.

TED
Yeah --!

BLAKE
Really --!

JUSTIN
Totally --!

ALL
Great!

As they stare in silent appreciation.

*

BRIAN
Enough of this shit -- come on!

*

*

As he leads them into:

6 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT 6

As they enter:

TED
(to the others)
Let's have a drink. On me!

But nobody exactly rushes to take him up on his offer.

BRIAN
I'm checking out the dance floor.

EMMETT
Me, too!

JUSTIN
Same here.

MICHAEL
(to David)
Thanks anyway.

Everyone takes off, leaving Ted and Blake standing alone. A beat then:

BLAKE
Guess I won't be winning any popularity contests tonight.

TED
What do you mean?

BLAKE
Your friends aren't exactly eager to be with us.

TED
That's their problem.

Just then, DINO, a shirtless skinny party boy, passes.

DINO
Hey, dude!

BLAKE
(uncomfortable)
How's it going?

DINO
Haven't seen you around. *

BLAKE
I've been -- away.

DINO
Well, welcome back. *
Need a favor?

BLAKE
Uh -- no. No, thanks. *

Blake leads Ted away.

TED
(looking back, a little
jealous)
Who's that?

BLAKE
Nobody.
(then, the truth)
My dealer.
(quickly)
Ex-dealer.

TED
I knew we shouldn't have come here.

BLAKE
It's okay. I'm okay.

TED
I'm not sure I am.

BLAKE
Look, you've got to trust me.

A beat, a glance, then:

TED
Your right. I do. So-- let's dance!

7 INT. BABYLON - DANCE FLOOR - LATER 7

Emmett, Michael, David, Brian and Justin are all dancing.

As the MUSIC stops, we HEAR over the sound system:

ANNOUNCER (o.s.)

Gentlemen and Gentlemen, welcome our
hostess for the evening, Her Royal
Rudeness -- Sheba, Queen of Babylon! *

HOOTS and HOLLERS as SHEBA -- a panzer-division drag queen --
enters on a sedan chair carried by FOUR NUBIAN SLAVE BOYS. *
They tip over the sedan chair, sending her tumbling onto the
stage. She gets up, adjusts herself.

SHEBA *

(adjusting her bodice)

Gotta make sure the Royal Tits are
intact.

(then, to her slaves)

All right, boys -- go play with
yourselves.

The Slave Boys carry off the sedan chair.

SHEBA (cont'd)

(she clears her throat, then
breathy, like a starlet)

Welcome to the Fifty-third Annual
Academy Awar-- oops, wrong night.
Welcome to the King of Babylon contest!

(after the cheers and whistles)

The competition is stiff -- and so are
the contestants. But you can still
sign up to drop trou and win a thou!
Our first contestant is Chad. Chad's
hobby is getting a tan, and he reads to
the blind. I'd like to practice my
braille on you, honey.

CONTESTANT #1, a hot-bodied Hunk, takes the platform, bumps
and grinds his way through an over-the-top striptease as the
crowd CHEERS. Brian watches with disdain.

BRIAN

Shaved chest. Implants. Steroids.
Hair Club for Men.

JUSTIN

It's sad -- these older guys, still
partying past their prime, not knowing
when to leave.

He offers Brian a sweet, innocent smile, then:

JUSTIN (cont'd)

So how about the real thing?

BRIAN
(glances at his watch)
Check back with me in an hour.

Justin is stung by that. Brian starts to walk away, Justin catches up, he's getting bolder. *

JUSTIN
What, like I'm the back-up plan? Who to do when all else fails?

BRIAN
(a touched nerve)
Look, how many times do I have to tell you -- we're not a couple. Michael and David are a couple. Lindsay and Melanie are a couple. Ted and what's-his-name are a couple. *

JUSTIN
So what are we? *

BRIAN
I don't know about you, but I'm single.

Brian walks off, as Michael comes over.

JUSTIN
God, he can be such a dick.

Michael sees that Justin is really hurt.

MICHAEL
I told you that long ago. So why are you still hanging around?

The answer comes back, plain and simple.

JUSTIN
For when he isn't.

As Justin watches as Brian dances with a HOTTIE.

8 INT. MALL - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT - P.J.102

8

Vic comes into the men's room, approaches an empty row of urinals. He places his shopping bag down, unzips. A CUTIE enters, goes to the urinal next to him, takes out his dick, starts to pee.

CUTIE
Hey.

Vic makes eye contact, quickly looks away. Then, he looks back and admires the Cutie's profile. The Cutie speaks to him again:

CUTIE (cont'd)
Whatcha up to?

VIC
Huh? Oh -- a little shopping. Dinner.
And a movie. The new Julia Roberts. I
just love her--

The Cutie finishes, zips up. Then, blatantly cruising him:

CUTIE
What're you into?

VIC
(thrown)
"Into"?

CUTIE
Yeah. What do you like to do?

A beat as Vic's eyes widen:

CUT TO:

9 INT. BABYLON - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

9

CONTESTANT #2, a Hunk dressed as a cop, is now on stage. As Contestant # 2 plays with his nightstick:

EMMETT

looks across the crowded room and makes eye contact with

BRENT

An Abercrombie kinda guy, whose unbuttoned shirt shows off an impressive six-pack. Brent notices Emmett, too. "The Love Theme from Episode 20" PLAYS as if in a trance, the two starstruck lovers to float towards each other.

In a "West Side Story" moment, everyone else in the room FREEZES as Emmett and Brent meet in a small pool of light that appears just for them. They snap their fingers a la Tony and Maria. They're in a world all their own. No one else exists. Then, as everyone DEFROSTS and Babylon throbs once more:

CUT BACK TO:

10 INT. MALL - OUTSIDE MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

10

Vic follows the Cutie out of the men's room just as a PLAIN-CLOTHES COP swoops in and grabs him by the arm. Vic reacts, startled.

VIC
What's going on--?

COP
You're under arrest.

VIC
(terrified)
For what?

The cop cuffs him.

11 INT. BABYLON - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

11

Contestant #2 is now stripped to just his cop boots, sunglasses, nightstick and thong.

12 INT. BABYLON - BAR - NIGHT

12

The guys stand at the bar. David is pontificating over a beer.

DAVID
The problem with this contest is that it exposes the singular, most tragic flaw of gay culture.

BRIAN
(a yuck-yuck, kneeslapper)
It exposes a lot more than that, Doc!

MICHAEL
Brian --!

DAVID
(continuing)
That we have this almost pathological obsession with youth, beauty, smooth muscular bodies --

BRIAN
(glancing at a passing beauty)
I know, it's a shame --

*
*

DAVID

Until we can break free of our stunted adolescence and shed these superficial values, we'll always be boys -- never men.

BRIAN

(bored)
Is that all?

MICHAEL

I find that to be profoundly insightful. *

BRIAN

I find it to be profoundly full of shit. An opinion put forth as truth by a bunch of hypocritical, jealous, guilt-ridden, self-loathing, middle-aged, sexually frustrated pseudo-intellectual fags who wish they were straight.

(to CAMERA)

And if you think that sounds like Melrose Place, you can eat my ass.

DAVID

Then why don't you sign up?

BRIAN

I don't need to dance in my underwear to get laid.

DAVID

Or maybe you can't handle the competition.

The gauntlet's been tossed. Brian downs the rest of Michael's beer and marches off to Sergio, the coat check slut, to sign up.

MICHAEL

He's doing it! *

DAVID

He won't do it. No way. *

MICHAEL

He's doing it! *

13 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

13

Back to the King of Babylon contest

SHEBA

Our next contestant is Mohammed, a master yoga instructor from Ript Gym, who can perform -- "auto-fellatio". What the fuck's that -- giving blow-jobs in cars? Because if it is -- I'm a master, too!

CONTESTANT #4 does a very limber striptease, Sheba steps off the stage for a break, perspiration dripping off her heavily made up face.

SHEBA (cont'd)

(to one of her Slave Boys; in her regular "male" voice)
That's one fuckin' hot stage-- and I don't mean the men.

The Slave Boy gives her a cigarette, lights it. Noticing a wet underarm:

SHEBA (cont'd)

(noticing her underarms)
Shit, I'm staining my lamé-- and I've got the "Best Pecs Contest" at Boytoy tomorrow.

He spots Justin standing there, sullen and alone.

SHEBA (cont'd)

Why the long face, sweetheart?

JUSTIN

Nothing --
(then)
This guy.

SHEBA

Ain't it always. So, what'd "this guy" do?

JUSTIN

He takes me for granted.

SHEBA

A walking wet dream like you could have anyone he wants!

JUSTIN

I know. That's the part I find so irritating.

SHEBA
Maybe he needs to know it.
(looking Justin over, slyly)
Maybe everybody needs to know it.

14 INT. LIBERTY DINER - NIGHT

14

MAXINE, the transvestite waitress, has answered the phone behind the counter. She calls to Debbie, who's in the middle of serving customers:

MAXINE
Hey, Deb -- telephone!

DEBBIE
(busy)
If it's Publisher's Clearing House,
tell 'em I won the sweepstakes last
year.

MAXINE
It's your brother

A beat. Debbie drops the jokes -- almost drops some plates -- rushes to the phone, grabs it from Maxine:

DEBBIE
Vic? Baby? Is everything all right?

INTERCUT WITH:

15 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

15

A terrified Vic is making his one, allowed phone call:

VIC
Don't panic --
(a beat)
I've been arrested.

DEBBIE
What?!

VIC
I said don't panic -- and don't tell
anyone. Nobody! Not even Michael.

DEBBIE
All right, all right. What happened?

VIC
I was at the mall. I went to pee.

DEBBIE

So what are they charging you with --
not flushing?

VIC

They say I -- I --
(embarrassed, finally)
Lewd conduct.

DEBBIE

Lewd conduct --? What the hell'd you
do -- wag it at someone?

VIC

I didn't do anything, Sis, I swear.
Can you come down right away -- I'm at
the Zone 8 Station on Liberty and
Grant.

DEBBIE

I'm leaving right away -- just stay
calm.

VIC

(anything but)
And could you bring my meds? I
should've taken them an hour ago --

DEBBIE

Don't worry. Don't worry about
anything.

Debbie hangs up. She could fall apart, but right now she
doesn't have the time. *

16 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

16

In the depths of Babylon, as Boys, Boys, Boys swirl around
them -- Emmett and Brent, charmingly shy and awkward with the
first blush of true love, hold hands, look deep into each
other's eyes.

EMMETT

I can't explain it, but I feel as
though --

BRENT

We've known each other all our lives.

EMMETT

It's as if you've been waiting for me --

BRENT

And I've been waiting for you.

EMMETT

Two halves of the same soul --

BRENT

-- that have finally come together.

And as they lean into a sweet, chaste kiss:

SLAM CUT TO:

17 INT. BABYLON - BACKROOM - NIGHT

17

Emmett is giving Brent the blowjob of his life. Brent is in a state of ecstasy, his eyes rolling to the back of his head, his breath just short of hyper-ventilation. He's moaning, screaming, banging on the wall! In fact, Brent is so noisy, some of the BACKROOM BETTIES stop what they're doing to look. As Brent shoots his load --

BRENT

Ahhh! Ahhh! AHHHH!

-- a couple Backroom Betties applaud. Emmett rises with a used cum towel, daintily dabs the corners of his mouth.

EMMETT

Was that all righ, my love? *

BRENT

(gasping for breath)

It was like Christmas and New Year's and my birthday, all rolled into one. *

EMMETT

(disappointed)

Not the Fourth of July? *

BRENT

I'm saving that for you. *

Handwritten scribble

He drops to his knees. [As an elaborate fireworks display goes off behind Emmett,] who is hyperventilating and screaming: *

18 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

18

As CONTESTANT #5 dances for the Boys, Blake excuses himself. *

BLAKE
I'll be right back --

TED
(a little nervous)
Where're you going?

BLAKE
The bathroom.

Ted watches Blake depart.

MICHAEL
Do you think you should let him go
alone?

TED
(defensive)
Would you like me to hold it for him?

MICHAEL
I mean, after what happened the last
time--

TED
It's called trust.

Brian pops some E, smiles at Ted.

BRIAN
You can trust he'll end up back in the
Emergency Room.

TED
(angry)
And maybe he won't. Maybe he'll
disappoint all of you and be all right.

BRIAN
(throwing an arm around Ted)
When you were a boy, did you save birds
with broken wings? *

Ted practically throws Brian's arm off of him.

TED
And what did you do -- tear them off? *

Just then, Emmett leads his inamorata over by the hand.

EMMETT
Everybody, I want you to meet a Very
Special Someone.

Emmett suddenly realizes that he doesn't know the Love of His
Life's name. Brent covers.

BRENT
I'm Brent.

The gang offers greetings.

ALL
(various ad-libs)
Hey Brent -- how's it going? -- Nice
to meet you --

MICHAEL
Anyone who's special to Emmett is
special to us. *

BRENT
Who?

EMMETT
(whispering in Brent's ear)
Emmett. That's me, darling.

DAVID
(finding it a bit -- peculiar)
So how long have you two known each
other?

EMMETT
In this life, only a brief while. But
I believe we've known each other many
times before.
(to Brent)
Don't you?

BRENT
Oh, we have!

EMMETT
We both love Bruce Willis movies --

BRENT
Banana Republic --

EMMETT/BRENT
Especially when they're having a sale!

EMMETT

Green onion-flavored potato chips--

BRENT

(taking Emmett's hand)
And our favorite song is "Somewhere Out
There."

BRIAN

It's uncanny.

Michael throws a friendly, welcoming arm around Brent.

MICHAEL

Come have a drink with us!

Ted watches, seething, then turns and walks away. Michael
sees and goes after him.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Hey, what's up --?

Ted doesn't answer, keeps walking.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

What's wrong?

Ted stops abruptly.

TED

Emmett knows some guy for all of
fifteen minutes and he's practically
one of the group. Blake you can barely
speak to!

MICHAEL

Maybe that's because I don't know what
to say. "So, you nearly killed my
friend!"-- "Hey, I hear you passed out
on the bathroom floor!"

Ted looks at him, not amused.

TED

I figured if anyone would give him a
chance, it would be you, Michael.

Then he walks away.

19 INT. HOUSE OF THE LESBIANS - NIGHT

19

There's an insistent POUNDING at the front door. MELANIE, in her bathrobe, goes to open it.

MELANIE

Hold on! Jesus -- I'm coming!

She opens the door to reveal Debbie, who immediately bursts in and blurts out:

DEBBIE

I tried to call, but there was no answer.

MELANIE

We turn the ringer off -- it wakes the baby.

DEBBIE

I'm sorry to come over so late --

LINDSAY creeps down the stairs.

LINDSAY

Mel, who is it --?

DEBBIE

Vic's in jail.

MELANIE/LINDSAY

What -- ?

DEBBIE

He said he was at the mall, he went to the men's room, next thing they arrested him for lewd conduct.

LINDSAY

"Lewd conduct?"

DEBBIE

He swears he didn't do anything. He's gonna need a lawyer, and I didn't know where else--

MELANIE

(ahead of her)

I'll get dressed.

Melanie turns to climb the stairs. Lindsay's attitude stops her.

LINDSAY
But if he didn't do anything, why'd they arrest him?

MELANIE
The cops sometimes like to play "Capture the Fag".

LINDSAY
Kids use those bathrooms.

A beat. Debbie turns to Lindsay.

DEBBIE
Are you saying you think something went on?

LINDSAY
I was just asking --

DEBBIE
Well, I know my own brother, and I'm telling you there's no way --!

Melanie tries to diffuse the situation.

MELANIE
We should probably get a move on.

Melanie runs upstairs. Debbie and Lindsay stand in awkward silence together.

20 INT. BABYLON - CATWALK - NIGHT

20

Justin finds Brian, perhaps on a cat-walk, checking out the action below. Justin joins him, casually lights a cigarette.

JUSTIN
You said check back with you in an hour.

BRIAN
(checks his watch)
I still have eight minutes.

Brian continues his search. Justin follows Brian's line of vision to his latest object of desire.

JUSTIN

He has pimples on his butt, a tragic endowment, and he's just getting over a nasty case of gonorrhoea.

BRIAN

(not buying it)
Uh-huh.

JUSTIN

Well, if I were you, I wouldn't wait that long. By then I may have other plans.

BRIAN

(amused)
I'll take my chances.

JUSTIN

So will I.

He walks off.

21 INT. BABYLON - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

21

Blake stands at a urinal, peeing. GUYS snort shit in the corner. Blake, with blinders on, looks straight forward, zips up, goes to wash his hands. From the next sink:

DINO

What's with you?

BLAKE

Nothing --

DINO

Who's your friend?

BLAKE

Nobody.

DINO

You look pretty tight to me. How come you didn't introduce us?

BLAKE

He wouldn't like you.

DINO

Maybe he would if I did him a favor.

BLAKE

He's not interested in your "favours" --

Dino pulls some shit out of his pocket.

DINO

Great stuff. Great price.

Blake looks at it for a beat. Is he tempted? If he is, he resists.

BLAKE

And I told you -- neither am I!

Proud of himself, Blake heads for the door.

22 INT. BABYLON - CONTINUOUS

22

Blake walks out of the men's room and finds Ted, waiting.

BLAKE

What're you doing --?

TED

Pretty much what it looks like:
loitering outside the men's room.

BLAKE

Did you come to check up on me?

TED

Of course not!

BLAKE

'Cause I told you I'm fine.

TED

I -- uh -- just seem to meet the cutest
guys here.

Blake smiles, Ted pulls him into a kiss -- just as Dino comes
out, locks eyes with him.

BLAKE

Let's go find the others --

Ted looks over and SEES Emmett and Brent strolling, hand-in-
hand, through Babylon as if it were a country lane.

TED

Let's not. I'd rather be with you.

BACK TO EMMETT AND BRENT

Continuing their stroll.

EMMETT

I've always dreamt about living in a little cottage --

BRENT

With a garden out back!

EMMETT

Where I'll grow daffodils and lavender and wear a big sun bonnet, like my Aunt Belle, that ties under the chin.

BRENT

And we'll cook gourmet meals --

EMMETT

Seasoned with our very own herbs --

BRENT

And on snowy evenings, we'll curl up in front of the fire with big mugs of tea -

BRENT (CONT'D)

I'll be right back -- don't go away. *

EMMETT

I'll be waiting right here.

They kiss, tenderly. As Emmett waves "ta-ta":

23 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

23

CONTESTANT #6 is dancing for the crowd. David checks his watch. *

DAVID

Had enough grinding, pulsating flesh for one night? *

MICHAEL

I'm ready whenever you are.

BRIAN

You can't leave now -- you'll miss my big number. *

MICHAEL

Right, like you'd ever go through with it.

BRIAN

(teasing)

If you leave, you'll never know.

Contestant #6 finishes his dance. *

SHEBA

If Dwayne becomes King, he'll be a ruler by which all others are measured. I ought to know -- I measured him.

(referring to a card)

Our next contestant likes younger men, his favorite past-time is feeling superior and his special skill is manipulating people.

Back at the bar, David taps Brian.

DAVID

Must be you.

Brian smiles, shrugs -- not necessarily.

SHEBA

Let's put our hands together for Pittsburgh's Hunkiest Chiropractor, Dr. David Cameron.

David, realizing what's happened, turns furiously to Brian.

DAVID

You asshole!

MICHAEL

I thought you were going to sign yourself up!

BRIAN

Now, why would I do that when you know I find this obsession with youth, abs and sex appalling.

MICHAEL

(to David)

You don't have to go up there.

DAVID
Don't worry, I have no intention of it.

MICHAEL
(relieved)
Thank God. You wouldn't want to make a fool of yourself.

A beat.

DAVID
What?

MICHAEL
I said, "Thank God. You wouldn't want to make a fool of --

DAVID
You think I'd make a fool of myself?

MICHAEL
(laughing)
Dancing around with your clothes off -- at your age?

Before it's even out of his mouth, Michael regrets having said it. David glares at him.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
I mean -- oh shit.

He gives up.

BRIAN
Forget it, Doc-- it was just a joke. I never expected you to go through with it.

DAVID
You think I can't do it?
(to Michael)
"At my age."

SHEBA
Dr. Cameron! Paging Dr. Cameron!

David looks at the crowd, which is impatiently clapping in rhythm, then marches to the stage.

MICHAEL
(calling)
David -- don't!

But there's no stopping him now. David takes the stage and begins to dance. Though he's tentative at first, he is charming in his awkwardness. A couple of O.S. calls of "Take it off!" coax him to remove his clothes, which at first he refuses to do. But a quick glimpse of Brian and Michael watching changes his mind. With a "what the hell!" he tears off his shirt. The crowd cheers and whistles!

ANGLE ON MICHAEL

looking around -- incredulous.

BACK TO DAVID

really getting down and dirty now. He pops open his fly.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
He's not!

BRIAN
Yeah. He is.

Michael covers his eyes as David teases the audience and receives a tremendous ovation. As Brian whistles and Michael looks on with disapproval and jealousy: - *

CUT TO:

24 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

24

Debbie and Melanie approach the Desk Sergeant who's chatting with another OFFICER.

MELANIE
Excuse me, Sergeant, we're here to see--

DEBBIE
Victor Grassi!

DESK SERGEANT
(checking his list)
Grassi-- Grassi. Sorry, ladies. No
can do.

DEBBIE
(angry)
Why the hell not?

MELANIE
(calming her)
Debbie, let me handle this.
(MORE)

MELANIE (cont'd)
(to the cop)
I'm Mr. Grassi's attorney.

DEBBIE
And I'm his sister.

DESK SERGEANT
He's still being processed. Come back
later.

DEBBIE
He can't wait until later! He's sick --
he needs his meds.

She pulls out a bottle of pills.

DESK SERGEANT
What's wrong with him?

MELANIE
He's H.I.V. positive.

DESK SERGEANT
Figures--

MELANIE
Excuse me?

DESK SERGEANT
We don't allow drugs in the holding
cell.

MELANIE
(a light correction)
It's "prescription medication."

DEBBIE
His life depends on it!

DESK SERGEANT
If he's that sick what was he doing in
a public men's room?

DEBBIE
Taking a piss! Officer, my brother is
a good, decent man.

MELANIE
Could you please tell me what his bail
is set at?

DESK SERGEANT

Sure.
(checking)
Thirty-five hundred.

MELANIE

Isn't that high for a first offense?

Debbie bows her head.

MELANIE (cont'd)

What?

DEBBIE

He got pulled over -- it was almost
twenty years ago. There was a joint in
the glove compartment. It wasn't even
his.

MELANIE

Why didn't he tell them?

DEBBIE

Because even when we were kids he'd
never squeal on me.

(then)

Now, where the hell am I gonna find
thirty-five hundred dollars?

Melanie goes over to the pay phone, grabs the phone book,
hands it to Debbie.

MELANIE

(to Debbie)

In the Yellow Pages.

25 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

25

Surrounded by drooling admirers, David puts his clothes back
on.

ADMIRER #1

Dude, that was so hot --!

ADMIRER #2

You are so cool --!

ADMIRER #3

You've got great abs --!

DAVID
(loving the attention)
They're essential for back support and
good posture.

Michael reacts uncomfortably as all three guys hand slips of
paper with their phone numbers to David.

ADMIRER #1
Call me, dude --

ADMIRER #2
Yeah, call me.

ADMIRER #3
Anytime!

Michael snatches the numbers out of David's hand and rips
them up, furiously.

MICHAEL
Do you mind? He's already taken!
(then, to David)
Well, I hope you're pleased with
yourself!

David smirks, quite pleased.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
And wipe that grin off your face this
minute!

David tries his best to.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
Now put your shirt on --

DAVID
But --

MICHAEL
-- I don't want to hear another word
about it!

*

*

CUT TO:

26 INT. BABYLON - ANOTHER LOCATION - CONTINUOUS

26

Justin watches as Brian makes eye contact with DREAMBOY. He goes over to the stage, whispers to Sheba, who then announces to the crowd:

SHEBA

May I have your attention, boys and boys? Our next contestant likes the Powerpuff Girls, margaritas and older men who take him for granted. Here's Justin!

Justin struts to the stage as our gang reacts with surprise.

EMMETT

Go, baby!

He whistles through his fingers. Justin takes his place under the lights, starts to dance.

ANGLE ON BRIAN

Ignoring Justin, he goes over to Dreamboy, whispers in his ear. Dreamboy smiles, then Brian leans in, kisses him full on the mouth. Next thing, their hands are all over each other, bodies rubbing together.

ON STAGE

Justin continues his dance.

BACK TO BRIAN

He's about to lead Dreamboy off to the backroom, when Dreamboy notices the cheering and applause going on around them, looks at the stage, sees what's happening.

BRIAN

Come on --

QAF - Ep.20 - PRE PRODUCTION DREAMBOY

33.

No, wait.

As Brian surveys the scene, realizing for the first time that his personal possession has become the competition:

36

CUT TO:

.27 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

27

We FIND Emmett where we last left him -- waiting. Brent returns.

EMMETT

(anxiously)

Where were you? I was starting to worry.

BRENT

Sorry, I was unavoidably detained.

EMMETT

That's all right. It just gave me more time to miss you while you were gone, and to be even happier when you returned!

Emmett goes to kiss him. Smells something.

EMMETT (cont'd)

Is that cologne?

BRENT

That's right.

EMMETT

I don't recall you ever wearing cologne.

BRENT

I just started.

Emmett nods, acceptingly, pushing way all doubt, takes Brent's hand.

EMMETT

Now, where were we -- oh, yes! In our cute little cottage --

BRENT

No, wait. I can't lie to you. We've meant too much to each other for that.

(beat)

I've met someone new.

EMMETT

(shocked and amazed)

New? We've only been together -- an hour and forty-five minutes.

BRENT

I never meant for it to happen. And you must believe me. I never, never meant to hurt you.

Off Emmett's astonished look:

*

CUT TO:

28 INT. BABYLON - STAGE AREA - NIGHT

28

The crowd around the stage is cheering and applauding Justin. Sheba announces:

*

SHEBA

May I present the new King of Babylon, His Royal Highness -- Justin!

*

*

*

She places the King's crown on Justin. Justin looks out, SEES:

SHEBA (cont'd)

- *

Whoever he is, honey, he's not going to take you for granted anymore!

*

*

BRIAN

watching. None too pleased. Next to him is Dreamboy, applauding the new King -- oblivious to you-know-who.

29 INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

29

Debbie and Melanie sitting beside each other. Debbie has the Yellow Pages, open to Bail Bondsmen, in her lap. Melanie clicks off.

MELANIE

Shit! Another won't give us the bail.

DEBBIE

What's with these guys?

MELANIE

For three-hundred and fifty bucks, it's not worth their time.

DEBBIE

That's half of my week's wages.

(shaking her head)

Next time, I'll tell Vic to murder someone.

(MORE)

CUT TO:

30

May I present
His Royal Highness

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Then his bail'll be big enough for them
to make their lousy ten percent.

MELANIE
Who's next?

Debbie checks the Yellow Pages.

DEBBIE
Dovey's bail Bonds.

MELANIE
Let's give Dovey a try.

As Melanie calls, Debbie rises, approaches the Desk Sergeant.

DEBBIE
So you work the night shift, huh? I
used to do that at the diner. Midnight
to eight. IN addition to eight to
four. Sixteen hours straight, to help
pay for my brother's medical bills.
But that's what you do when someone in
your family's sick.
(beat)
You got anyone in your family needs
attention?

DESK SERGEANT
(reticent, but --)
My sister's diabetic. Had it since she
was ten.

DEBBIE
How's she doin'?

DESK SERGEANT
Had to take off her leg, couple of
years ago. Now she's losing her sight.

DEBBIE
God bless her. I imagine you'd swim
the English Channel to be there for
her.

DESK SERGEANT
I don't see her much. We never got
along. Now why don't you let me do my
work?

A beat, then:

DEBBIE

One pill. One fucking pill!

She takes it out of the bottle, puts it in front of him, goes back to Melanie, looking for a ray of hope. Instead, she gets a gloomy shake of the head.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

Where the hell are we going to get thirty-five hundred bucks at eleven o'clock at night?

And suddenly, she knows.

CUT TO:

30 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

30

Brian and Dreamboy are really dirty dancing now. Brian starts to lead him toward the backroom again -- only this time to be stopped by the newly crowned King of Babylon. *

JUSTIN

Did you see me?

BRIAN

Yeah, I saw you.

JUSTIN

Well aren't you going to say anything?

BRIAN

The contest must've been rigged.

DREAMBOY

(to Brian, impressed)

You know him?

Brian doesn't enjoy the reflected glory.

BRIAN

I taught him everything he knows. 36.

JUSTIN

Except how to dance.

(to Dreamboy)

What's your name? I won't ask him, since I'm sure he doesn't know.

DREAMBOY

Shawn.

JUSTIN
You're hot. I was watching you.

DREAMBOY
You were?

JUSTIN
It made me want to fuck all night.

Brian rolls his eyes.

JUSTIN (cont'd)
Want to get out of here?

DREAMBOY
You lead.

Justin takes Dreamboy by the hand, heads for the door. Brian stops him.

BRIAN
Where're you going?

JUSTIN
Back to my place.

BRIAN
I thought we had plans.

JUSTIN
Only if you couldn't do better.
(extracting himself)
Well I told you -- I might have plans,
too.

DREAMBOY
What's his problem?

JUSTIN
He's just my stalker.

DREAMBOY
I suppose we could have a three way
only he's kinda old.

JUSTIN
And we're kinda leaving.

Justin barely gives Brian a look as he exits with Dreamboy. Brian watches the King depart with his prize.

31 INT. BABYLON - DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

31

Justin and Dreamboy pass Michael and David. David is dancing with several SHIRTLESS ADMIRERS. Michael pushes in.

MICHAEL

Excuse me, but aren't you the person who said about an hour ago he'd had enough of pulsating, grinding flesh for one night and wanted to go home?

DAVID

What's the rush?

MICHAEL

No rush. I just thought you disapproved. You know -- all the misplaced emphasis on smooth, muscular bodies -- the obsession with youth -- the shallow values.

DAVID

Maybe I was being a little judgemental.

MICHAEL

Try hypocritical.

DAVID

So who's the one who's being judgemental now?

MICHAEL

Just be honest. Don't put people down for doing what you always wished you could do -- but didn't have the guts to take off your shirt!

(then)

I'm going home.

He walks away.

DAVID

Michael --!

FOLLOW Michael past:

TED AND BLAKE

BLAKE

There's Michael.

TED
(extremely disinterested)
So?

BLAKE
You haven't seen him all night. Don't
you want to--

TED
I told you -- I'd rather be with you.

BLAKE
I know, but -- is there some--

TED
What?

BLAKE
Problem. On account of me.

TED
Of course not!

BLAKE
Because if there is -- I don't want to
come between you and your friends.

TED
You're not.
(beat)
And even if you were, it wouldn't
matter.

BLAKE
Don't say that. I don't want to do
anything to hurt you. If I ever
thought I was--

TED
If a friend of mine has a problem with
you, all it means is they were never my
friend to begin with.

He pulls Blake close, protectively.

32 ~~INT.~~ INT. BABYLON - ROOF - NIGHT

32

Emmett, hurt and angry, rages at Brent.

EMMETT
How could you do this to me -- to us--?
After all we shared!

BRENT

Please, don't make this harder than it is. It's always painful when something's over.

*
*
*

EMMETT

You said you never felt so close to anyone in your life. That we were like two halves of the same soul.

BRENT

Things change. People change.

EMMETT

I haven't changed. I still love you. You're the one who no longer loves me.

BRENT

In time, passion dies. You have to move on.

EMMETT

So move! Go! Who's stopping you?

Brent turns to go, stops.

BRENT

I'll remember you -- always.

*

Brent walks away. Emmett call, angrily.

EMMETT

I gave you the best minutes of my life!

33 EXT. BABYLON - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

33

Debbie and Melanie arrive just as Michael's leaving. He spots them first.

MICHAEL

Mom -- Melanie, what are you doing here?

MELANIE

Where's Brian?

CUT TO:

34 INT. BABYLON - MOMENTS LATER

34

Debbie has just filled in the gang (Michael, David, Ted, Blake, Emmett, Brian).

MICHAEL

Why didn't you call me?

DEBBIE

Your Uncle Vic made us promise not to tell anyone.

EMMETT

God, can you imagine how humiliated he must've felt -- being dragged off in handcuffs?

TED

Not to mention terrified.

DEBBIE

(to Brian)

I was hoping you might be able to help.

BRIAN

I would, Deb, but I don't have that much in checking.

MELANIE

What about credit cards?

BRIAN

Maxed.

MICHAEL

What do you do -- spend every cent?

DAVID

I can cover it. Will they take a check?

MELANIE

Only if it's certified. Look, what if we each go to the cash machine, take out as much as we can --

As they put their heads together and try to figure out what they can contribute ("I can put in five hundred"-- "I can take out a thousand"--), Blake, on the periphery, sees his dealer, Dino, talking to someone, goes over to him. Ted watches, concerned. *

ANGLE ON BLAKE AND DINO

We don't hear their conversation. Blake grabs a napkin and a pencil from the bar, writes something down, thanks Dino and returns. He hands Melanie the slip of paper.

BLAKE
If you call this number and mention
this guy's name, he'll put up the bail.

Melanie doesn't ask questions, gets on the cell phone immediately.

TED
What was that about?

BLAKE
I asked Dino for a favor.

Melanie, still on the phone, gives a thumbs-up sign to the others.

DEBBIE
(to Blake)
Thank you -- uh -- ? *

BLAKE
Blake. *

DEBBIE
Blake. I'm Debbie. *
(then to Ted) *
That's some friend you've got there. *

TED
I like to think so. 42.

MELANIE
(clicking off her phone)
It's all set. Let's go. *

35 INT. POLICE STATION - DAWN

35

The Desk Sergeant leads an ashen and shaken Vic down a hall and into the waiting area where Debbie, Melanie, Brian, Michael, David, Emmett, Ted and Blake wait. Vic stops when he sees the mob scene -- almost wants to turn around and go back, he's so ashamed.

VIC

Jesus Christ, Sis, I told you not to tell anybody!

DEBBIE

This isn't "anybody" -- this is "everybody". Everybody who cares about you.

Lindsay steps up beside Debbie.

LINDSAY

That includes me.

Vic looks at them all, touched.

VIC

I'd like to thank all of you for your concern. And I assure you that the only thing I'm guilty of is maybe missing the urinal. *

DEBBIE

You were always a lousy shot. Now come, take your meds.

VIC

The Desk sergeant gave me my pill.

Debbie wasn't expecting that. She looks over at the Sergeant to offer her thanks, but he looks away.

MELANIE

(arm around Debbie)
At least he did it.

EMMETT

So, was it anything like prison porn? 10

TED

Shirtless studs stroking themselves and waiting for their trial date? *

As everyone starts to file out, Michael stops Blake.

MICHAEL

I just wanted to say thanks -- for helping my Uncle Vic.

BLAKE

No problem.

MICHAEL

And, I'm sorry if I've been a little-- shitty to you. *

BLAKE

It just proves how much you care about him. *

MICHAEL

I do. We all do. You, too. *

BLAKE

Yeah-- *

They laugh a bit as Ted approaches.

TED

Did I miss something?

Michael and Blake both smile, shake their heads.

MICHAEL/BLAKE

No -- nothing --

As they head for the door:

36 INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

36

David and Michael are getting undressed for bed.

DAVID

I don't think I've ever seen you so jealous.

MICHAEL

I was not jealous.

DAVID

Now who's being dishonest?

MICHAEL

Well, how would you like it if your
boyfriend was being ogled by every fag
in town?

DAVID

It so happens he is.

MICHAEL

I am?

DAVID

Constantly. Only you never notice.

MICHAEL

Maybe that's been my problem -- faulty
gaydar.

David laughs and takes Michael in his arms.

DAVID

Lucky for me.

MICHAEL

So now that you've proven to everyone
how hot you are -- even "at your age" --
I suppose you'll be out partying every
night.

DAVID

Not every night. Although I didn't
mind the attention -- knowing I'm still
attractive. I'll even admit hot young
guys with smooth, muscular bodies have
a certain appeal.

(beat)

But they'll never take the place of my
work, my son, you --

MICHAEL

Say, before you hang up those jeans
until next laundry day, how about
dancing -- just for me?

And as David goes into his dance:

37 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

37

Morning. Brian, Michael, Emmett and Ted are in a booth.
Brian takes a sip of his coffee, disgusted.

BRIAN

This coffee's for shit!

Michael knows what's really bugging Brian.

MICHAEL

Oh, cheer up. So Justin's the new King of Babylon.

EMMETT

So the cub stole the lion's prey.

TED

So they're snapping at your heels and even though you'd like to rest on your laurels, secure in your position of power, you've got to run faster and faster and--

BRIAN

So why don't you pass the fucking sugar?

EMMETT

You should be proud of him. He's learned his lessons well.

Just then, Brent and his latest love, enter the diner, hanging all over each other.

MICHAEL

Hey, isn't that Brent?

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Who's he with?

EMMETT

Must be his new boyfriend.

Emmett looks at him and "The Love Theme From Episode 20" PLAYS.

TED

Where're you going?

Emmett doesn't answer, goes over to Brent, who, seeing him, rises. They meet.

EMMETT

(after a beat)

It's been a long time.

BRENT
I've thought of you often.

EMMETT
You look good.

BRENT
You, too. Are you seeing anyone?

EMMETT
Not really. You?

BRENT
(nods, gestures)
We just met.

EMMETT
So you'll be free tonight?

BRENT
Probably. Would you like to --

EMMETT
We can't go back. I prefer to remember
the way we were. *

Emmett brushes a couple of wisps of hairs from his brow:

JUSTIN

swings into the diner, joins the gang.

JUSTIN
What a night!

BRIAN
I don't want to hear about it.

JUSTIN
Okay.

BRIAN
How was he?

JUSTIN
So fucking hot! We must've done it
nineteen times. My dick's going to be
sore for a week.

BRIAN
That's enough.

MICHAEL
Actually, I wouldn't mind hearing more.

TED
Speak slowly. And enunciate.

JUSTIN
He gives great head, and he wanted me
to fuck him with my crown on, which was
kind of kinky.

Brian pulls out some bills, starts to go --

JUSTIN (cont'd)
(specifically for Brian)
But then he got a little clingy. He
wanted to know when he could see me
again.

A beat, then:

BRIAN
What did you tell him?

JUSTIN
I said he could see me in his dreams.

Brian smiles. So does Justin. And as we PULL AWAY:

Someone is removing the King of Babylon poster and replacing
it with one for "THE ABSOLUTE ABS CONTEST"!

EMMETT
So who's up for the "Absolute Abs
Contest"?

THE END