

queer asfolk

EPISODE 306

Teleplay By
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Story By
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&
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queerasfolk

EPISODE 306

CAST LIST

BRIAN KINNEY.....Gale Harold
MICHAEL NOVOTNY.....Hal Sparks
JUSTIN TAYLOR.....Randy Harrison
TED SCHMIDT.....Scott Lowell
EMMETT HONEYCUTT.....Peter Paige
LINDSAY PETERSON.....Thea Gill
MELANIE MARCUS.....Michelle Clunie
BEN BRUCKNER.....Robert Gant
ETHAN GOLD.....Fabrizio Filippo
VIC GRASSI.....Jack Wetherall
JENNIFER TAYLOR.....Sherry Miller
DAPHNE CHANDERS.....Makyla Smith
and as
DEBBIE NOVOTNY.....Sharon Gless

GUEST CAST

FRISKY COP	ALEXA SCOTT	YET ANOTHER NEIGHBOUR
GARDNER VANCE	SUNNY REED	OLDER WOMAN
JIM STOCKWELL	ROY	DIGNIFIED GENTLEMAN
DOMINIC	DENNIS REED	GLENN STONE
NANCY	DEDE	BRAD
DIRECTOR	PHIL	MARSHALL
JERKERS	PATRICIA MAYERHOFF	FIRST OFFICER
EDDIE	ANOTHER NEIGHBOUR	SECOND OFFICER

1. INT. MICHAEL'S AND BEN'S APT. - MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - DAY p.1
Early morning. MICHAEL's asleep in his bed -- alone. He wakes,
2. INT. MICHAEL'S AND BEN'S APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS p.1
He tiptoes through the living room, moving toward the bathroom.
3. EXT. BABYLON - NIGHT p.1
Michael and BRIAN are walking past a long line-up of impatient,
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Morning sunlight floods through the bare windows of Ethan's kitchen
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Emmett is measuring in the empty house, with the assistance of
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The boys lie in bed naked, wearing nothing but their rings. Ethan
18. INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT p.34
Michael has just arrived, dressed to go out. Brian, however, is
19. EXT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT - STREET - DAY p.36
Ethan's packing up his old Toyota (or Chevy, whatever).
20. INT. MC GLADES'S TAVERN - DAY p.37
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21. EXT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT p.39
Ted and Emmett make their way to the front door of the house.
22. INT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT p.39
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The reception room of the Harrisburg concert hall. The

24. INT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT p.43
The party continues. Ted and Emmett are the complete center of
25. INT. MICHAEL BEN'S APT. - BATHROOM/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT p.46
It's late. Ben is bent over the toilet, retching into the bowl.
26. INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT p.48
It's very late. Almost closing time. Still, there're boys on

FADE IN:

1 INT. MICHAEL'S AND BEN'S APT. - MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - DAY 1

Early morning. MICHAEL's asleep in his bed -- alone. He wakes, immediately aware that Ben is not with him. He slips, naked, from under the covers, shivers across the cold, wood floors into:

CUT TO:

2 INT. MICHAEL'S AND BEN'S APT. - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 2

He tiptoes through the living room, moving toward the bathroom. The door is open a crack. Looking guilty for being sneaky and slightly terrified by what he might find, he nonetheless creeps closer.

MICHAEL (V.O.)

So there I was, stark-naked, freezing my tail off -- spying on Ben.

Through the cracked door, we SEE Michael seeing BEN inject himself in the ass with liquid anabolic steroids.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. BABYLON - NIGHT 3

Michael and BRIAN are walking past a long line-up of impatient, chilly, underdressed men waiting to get into the club. Brian's discreetly sucking back a joint. The irresistible throb of muffled dance music is heard from inside the club.

BRIAN

Was he plucking his magic twanger?

MICHAEL

Not exactly. He had a needle, and he was giving himself a shot in the ass.

BRIAN

The Nutty Professor a Juice Pig? I am so turned on. Feel.

He places Michael's hand on his crotch.

MICHAEL

Cut it out. I've seen him do it twice now.

(beat)

I think he's using steroids.

(CONTINUED)

Brian takes a final toke from the roach. As he exhales a huge cloud of pot smoke, flips it away.

BRIAN

For the life of me, I'll never understand why so many gay men want to fuck up their bodies with drugs.

MICHAEL

He's always at the gym -- he gets in these really nasty moods --

BRIAN

"'Roid Rage."

He checks out a guy with an amazing body, waiting on line.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Consider it a small price for having an amazing body.

MICHAEL

You're a fucking big help.

They pass TED and EMMETT, waiting near the front of the line. Emmett, wearing a diaphanous number that offers little protection from the cold, sees Brian and Michael, calls out, waving.

EMMETT

Hey, guys!

Michael, seeing them, pulls Brian over.

MICHAEL

How are the two love birds?

TED

Freezing their tits off.

EMMETT

At least I won't have to pinch my nips to get them all taut --

BRIAN

Allow me.

He gives Emmett's nipple an agonizing twist, making Emmett scream.

EMMETT

E-owww!

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

Can you believe the line to get into
this dump?

We SEE a couple of UNIFORMED COPS moving down the line,
frisking guys, checking I.D.'s.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It's on account of those kids who
O.D.'d.

BRIAN

So because some ignorant amateurs
didn't know what they were doing the
rest of us should be punished?

TED

Take it up with your friend, the Chief.

BRIAN

(to Michael, flashing a pass)
Come on, let's go in -- before my dick
gets frostbite.

TED

You have a guest pass?

Ted and Emmett start to follow them in -- but Brian stops
them.

BRIAN

And only one guest.

Michael gives the guys an apologetic smile as he and Brian
are ushered inside.

TED

Asshole.

They return to their place in line, where an intimidating COP
is waiting to frisk them. Emmett grandly raises his hands
over his head.

EMMETT

(to the cop)
Work the pockets, honey. Work the
pockets.

CUT TO:

4 INT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

4

Morning sunlight floods through the bare windows of Ethan's kitchen where JUSTIN and ETHAN are in an old, claw footed bathtub, taking a bath.

ETHAN

Want me to wash your back?

JUSTIN

Any excuse to get your hands on me.

ETHAN

(sudsing him)

Cleanliness is next to horniness --

JUSTIN

When you're finished, I know this cool game we can play --

(whispering, licking his ear)

It's called, "Hide the Soap Bar."

As they start to kiss and make out, the phone RINGS. Ethan grabs the cord, pulls it over to the tub, answers.

ETHAN

Hello? Yeah? Oh hey, how's it going?

(he listens for a few beats, as

he rinses Justin's back --

stops)

No fucking way! That's fantastic!

JUSTIN

(eager to know)

What?

ETHAN

Prepared? Are you kidding? I've been preparing my whole life! -- Yeah -- okay -- thanks, man.

He hangs up, excitedly.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

That was Glenn.

(beat)

Yosef Treblek had a triple bypass!

JUSTIN

Who's Yosef Treblek?

ETHAN

This Hungarian violinist.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

That's too bad.

ETHAN

No, it's the greatest thing that's ever happened! He was supposed to play with the Harrisburg Symphony, but obviously he can't now, so Glenn suggested me, the runner-up in the Heifetz Competition, as the last minute replacement -- and they said yes!

JUSTIN

My God -- your first concert.

ETHAN

Of course it's not Boston or Philadelphia --

JUSTIN

It doesn't matter -- it's a start!

(a beat, then)

I'm just sorry I can't be there.

ETHAN

Me, too --

JUSTIN

(being very practical)

But it's what you have to do.

(revising that)

What we have to do.

Ethan gets out of the tub, slips into his robe -- then reaches into the pocket, produces a small box.

ETHAN

I was going to give you this when the phone rang.

He removes a ring, holds it up for Justin to see.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I got two of them. One for you, one for me. They weren't very expensive, but the guy who made them swore they're one of a kind.

Justin swallows hard, as Ethan slips the ring onto his finger.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

I thought it would be a way for us to be together -- even when we're apart.

(CONTINUED)

Justin looks up at Ethan -- then tenderly pulls him to him, pressing his lips to his. As Ethan slips his robe off and gets into the tub, without breaking the kiss.

CUT TO:

5 INT. VANGARD AGENCY - BOARDROOM - DAY

5

Brian, GARDNER VANCE, JIM STOCKWELL and two advisors, DOMINIC and NANCY, sit at the board table, watching the end of Stockwell's ten second TV spot on a large television monitor.

ON SCREEN

A series of photographs, up to the present, of Stockwell's illustrious career.

PORTENTOUS VOICE (V.O.)
"Citizen. War Hero. Cop. Chief of
Police."

The commercial ends with a Patton-esque close-up of Stockwell wearing his police uniform in front of an American flag and the Portentous Voice saying:

PORTENTOUS VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
"Jim Stockwell: You can sleep at night
knowing he's the Mayor."

When it's over, Dominic and Nancy look to Brian expectantly, smugly proud of their work. Brian says nothing.

STOCKWELL
Well?

Brian gives Stockwell a look, then:

BRIAN
If I want to sleep at night, I can take
a Xanax. Or watch your ad.

Vance clears his throat, nervously.

VANCE
What my partner means is--

BRIAN
What I mean is, it's fucking boring.

Dominic and Nancy jump to defend it.

NANCY
That spot was made by one of the best
agencies in the state.

(CONTINUED)

DOMINIC

Ninety-six percent of the test group we showed it to reacted favorably.

BRIAN

Who were they, insomniacs?

STOCKWELL

Our loyal supporters.

BRIAN

You've got their votes already. But what about the voters who are undecided, or who wouldn't cast a ballot for a law and order candidate? You're going to need to pull them into your camp in order to win. And you're sure as hell not going to do it with that.

He nods toward the screen.

NANCY

And I suppose you have a better plan?

BRIAN

(to Stockwell)

You work out?

STOCKWELL

Four times a week. Religiously.

BRIAN

Any sports?

STOCKWELL

Golf. Swimming. Basketball.

BRIAN

Hobbies?

STOCKWELL

Building model airplanes.

BRIAN

No shit. I did that when I was a kid.

(to Vance)

You, too?

VANCE

(a bit confused)

Sure -- who didn't? But what's--

*

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

--the point? The point is, I can relate to it. Everyone can. But who the hell's going to relate to some stiff in a uniform.

VANCE

Take it easy, Brian --

STOCKWELL

It's all right. I don't mind the truth --

(to Brian)

-- even if you use it like an assault weapon.

(then)

So what do you suggest?

BRIAN

Change your image. Stop selling yourself as a hero. Start selling yourself as a man. *

NANCY

That's it?

BRIAN

(patiently continuing)

An ordinary man, who has the same cares and concerns as everyone else. Only difference is, you're in a position to do something about it.

Stockwell looks concerned, finally:

STOCKWELL

I know I came to you for some fresh ideas. However, it's a radical change from the campaign we've been running.

DOMINIC

Too radical.

Brian shrugs.

BRIAN

It's your call. But from the way things are going, I'd say you have nothing to lose -- except the election.

CUT TO:



6 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

6

As Ted, MELANIE and LINDSAY eat their lunch -- Emmett is practically buried in paint samples, swatches and fabric books.

EMMETT

This shade of apricot for the walls is calling out for a plum carpet -- which is practically screaming for the raspberry couch and peach cushions --

TED

I knew I should've ordered the fruit cobbler.

LINDSAY

(tactfully)

Isn't it a bit extreme --?

MELANIE

For Emmett, I'd say it's a bit subdued.

EMMETT

Excuuuuse me?

LINDSAY

You're moving into a different kind of neighborhood. It's not the Gay Ghetto. It's a bedroom community.

TED

There's a difference?

MELANIE

It's more traditional. More reserved. So, maybe you need to change your style. Lose the Streisand posters --

EMMETT

"The Main Event" was going in the entry --

LINDSAY

Your slave boy lamps --

TED

They were going on the bar --

MELANIE

Think more about -- fitting in, rather than -- standing out.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

Think our house.

Emmett looks at them in total disbelief.

EMMETT

Your house. Am I to believe that I'm actually getting decorator tips from -- lesbians?

TED

Look, this is Emmett's project. He has carte blanche to make the house exactly the way he wants it. Streisand, plums, kumquats -- if that's what he wants, then that's what it'll be.

He gives Emmett a smooch. DEBBIE comes over.

DEBBIE

(confidentially)

By the way, you didn't hear this from me -- and I didn't hear it from my cop boyfriend -- but a certain police chief who wants to be mayor is trying to get himself some attention by going after businesses that pander to -- shall we say -- prurient interests.

TED

I'll have you know that what I'm doing is totally legal.

DEBBIE

Honey, if they want to, they can always find something.

TED

I make sure my business is run to the letter of the law.

EMMETT

Teddy's immaculate.

(with pride)

He rinses out his underwear before he puts them in the laundry!

TED

Thanks for the heads up, Deb.

Debbie sees Brian come in.

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

(loud enough for all to hear)
Don't thank me, thank Benedict Arnold
Kinney. He's the one who's working for
the enemy.

BRIAN

Nice to see you, too. Split pea soup
to go.

Debbie gives Brian a dirty look, turns to Justin, bussing
nearby.

DEBBIE

You get it. And feel free to piss in
it.

(back to Brian)

Traitor!

BRIAN

You really ought to learn to separate
business from personal feelings, Deb.

DEBBIE

Like you? No, thanks.

She goes to take an order, leaving Justin to bring Brian his
soup. But first he makes sure his ring is well displayed.
Brian takes the cup, notices the ring.

JUSTIN

That's a dollar fifty.

Brian reaches into his pocket, hands Justin a twenty. Justin
goes to take it. Brian sees the ring on his finger, takes
Justin's hand. *

BRIAN

Where'd you get the ring? *

JUSTIN

Ethan. *

BRIAN

How romantic. He proposed? *

Justin removes his hand -- and the money, moves to the cash
register.

JUSTIN

A lot you'd know about romance. *

He goes to give Brian his change.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Keep it.

JUSTIN

That's a big tip.

BRIAN

You can buy him some flowers. I'm sure he'd like that.

As Brian leaves with his soup.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S AND BEN'S APT. - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Ben, wearing only his shorts, is in the kitchen mixing himself a fruit, yogurt and protein powder shake in a blender. He goes over to Michael, working at the computer.

BEN

Having an internet affair?

MICHAEL

(distracted)

Huh?

BEN

You've been on it a long time.

MICHAEL

Oh, I'm doing some research.

BEN

For work.

MICHAEL

For you.

He hands Ben some printouts. Ben glances at them.

BEN

Steroids?

A beat, then Michael confesses:

MICHAEL

I saw you.

BEN

Saw me what?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

Shooting up. So unless you've suddenly become a heroin addict, I figure that's what it is.

BEN

Michael, are you spying on me?

MICHAEL

I'm not spying. We live together. How could I not notice?

BEN

A lot of guys use them, okay? To fight body wasting.

MICHAEL

But you aren't wasting.

BEN

Yet.

MICHAEL

Did your doctor prescribe them?

BEN

No.

MICHAEL

Then where'd you get them?

BEN

What is this, an interrogation?

MICHAEL

I'm concerned, that's all. It says there're a lot of side effects: mood swings, diarrhea, liver damage --

Ben cuts Michael off, a bit too roughly.

BEN

I'm aware of the potential side-effects -- I've done my research, too.

MICHAEL

Well, we should've at least talked it over.

BEN

Look, I'm just trying a cycle to see if it makes any difference. And so far the advantages are beating the disadvantages.

(CONTINUED)

Ben takes Michael's hand, puts it on his hard bicep.

BEN (CONT'D)
That's not too bad huh?

MICHAEL
It's fine --

Ben moves Michael's hand to his stomach.

BEN
How about that?

Michael can't help himself, strokes Ben's hard abs appreciatively.

MICHAEL
Nice --

Ben takes Michael's hand, moves it to his dick.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Don't tell me it works on that, too --

They smile, tensions relieved at least for the moment. Then as Ben wraps Michael in his huge arms, slides his tongue into his mouth.

CUT TO:

The basketball court is filled with A DIRECTOR, A CAMERA CREW AND VARIOUS OTHER MEDIA AND ADVERTISING TYPES. Stockwell is playing basketball with a group of YOUNG TEENAGE BOYS. (Diversity, please.) He's dripping with sweat, looks very sexy in his soaked through tank top that reveals his well-muscled upper torso. His hair is mussed, not perfectly combed, down on his forehead, making him look younger, more relaxed. He leaves the game to speak to the camera, a little breathless, but with surprising charm and ease.

STOCKWELL
I'm Jim Stockwell -- Police Chief and Coach of my son's basketball team. There was a time you could send your kids to the park. Before drugs. Before illegal clubs. Before sex establishments. As a crime-fighter and a parent, I'd like to see those times again. I know you would, too. Vote for me for Mayor, and let's make Pittsburgh "Family Friendly" once more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He unconsciously raises his shirt up to wipe his face, revealing a very hot flash of stomach.

BRIAN (O.S.)
Keep rolling.

ANGLE ON BRIAN AND THE DIRECTOR

The DIRECTOR does as instructed, keeps it rolling, as Brian WATCHES Stockwell on a monitor, mopping his brow. When he's done, he lets the shirt drop.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Did you get that?

DIRECTOR
Yeah.

BRIAN
Okay --

DIRECTOR
(calls)
Cut!

Stockwell comes over.

STOCKWELL
How was that?

BRIAN
If I didn't know better, I'd swear you were Tom Cruise.

CUT TO:

9 INT. TED'S WAREHOUSE - DAY

9

Ted's JERKERS are lined up, military style, wearing jockstraps, thongs or nothing at all. Ted goes down the line, inspects them like a General -- trusty EDDIE, with his clipboard, at his side.

TED
Everyone have valid I.D.'s?

JERKERS
Yes, sir!

TED
Any convicted felons?

JERKERS
No, sir!

(CONTINUED)

TED

Any illegal drugs on the premises?

JERKERS

No, sir!

TED

Excellent. All right then, back to work. And keep it clean. I mean, keep it dirty.

JERKERS

Yes, sir!

The jerkers head back to work. Eddie checks off items as Ted runs through them:

TED

Fire alarm, sprinkler system, handicapped ramp and toilet?

EDDIE

All up to code, Mr. Schmidt.

TED

Any rodents or pests in the building?

EDDIE

Only the human kind, Mr. Schmidt.

He chuckles at his own joke, Ted gives him a glare. This is business.

TED

All rules and regulations the correct size and clearly posted?

EDDIE

Measured to the inch. Just like your jerkers, Mr. Schmidt.

TED

Well then, Eddie --

(settling in his chair)

I'd say we have nothing to worry about. Every detail has been checked and re-checked. Let 'em come and inspect. We at Teddy's Whack-Shack are ready for them!

As he puts his feet up, gives Eddie a confident wink:

CUT TO:

10 INT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

10

Ethan is being interviewed by an attractive young woman, ALEXA SCOTT. A small tape recorder sits on the table between them.

ALEXA

How do you feel about your first concert appearance -- scared, confident, excited?

ETHAN

Definitely all of the above.

ALEXA

It's quite a remarkable achievement for someone so young, and obviously so gifted to have such sudden success.

She offers him a smile that's more than professional, she's smitten.

ALEXA (CONT'D)

I also understand that until recently, you were performing on street corners?

ETHAN

Got to pay the rent.

ALEXA

Then this should be a whole new experience.

ETHAN

Yeah, my audience actually gets to hear me sitting down.

Alexa laughs, charmed. Just then, Justin and DAPHNE burst through the door, laughing. They stop when they see Ethan with someone.

JUSTIN

Hey, what's up?

ETHAN

(lying quickly -- and convincingly)

This is my cousin Justin and his girlfriend, Daphne. They use the apartment sometimes, when I'm not here.

(then)

This is Alexa Scott, she's interviewing me for the paper.

(CONTINUED)

Justin gets it.

JUSTIN

Oh. Right.

ETHAN

So why don't you come back some other time?

JUSTIN

Yeah -- okay -- I'll see you later.

(then)

C'mon, Daph --

Justin takes a confused Daphne's arm, quickly ushers her out.

ETHAN

Sorry for the interruption --

ALEXA

Just a couple more questions. Do you have a girlfriend?

ETHAN

I'd prefer not to talk about that.

ALEXA

That usually means yes.

Ethan smiles.

ALEXA (CONT'D)

So what are your thoughts on love?

ETHAN

When I find it, I hope it's as romantic as the second movement of the Brahms Violin Concerto.

As Ethan gives Alexa a smile that could melt even a reporter's heart:

CUT TO:

11 EXT. STREET - DAY

11

Justin and Daphne are sitting on the curb, smoking.

DAPHNE

"Girlfriend"? What the fuck was that?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

JUSTIN

His agent doesn't want anyone to know he's gay. He thinks it could hurt his career.

DAPHNE

Who gives a shit who a violinist is fucking?

JUSTIN

Don't ask me. But I said I'd go along with it.

DAPHNE

He's making you lie?

JUSTIN

It's something he's worked his whole life for. I wouldn't want anything to happen because of me.

A beat, then:

DAPHNE

You know, Brian might not've been everything you wanted in a boyfriend, but at least he never asked you to lie.

JUSTIN

Brian didn't have his entire future career at stake.

DAPHNE

So you're going to be his "cousin" who lives with him? Like anyone's dumb enough to believe that.

JUSTIN

No one's going to know.

DAPHNE

Justin, you almost died when you came out. How can you go back in -- for anyone?

JUSTIN

I don't want to talk about it.

DAPHNE

And it's fucking unfair of him to make you pretend you're something you're not--

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

JUSTIN
(cuts her off angrily)
I said I don't want to talk about it --
so just mind your own fucking business!

As Justin ditches his cigarette, stalks away:

CUT TO:

12 INT. TED AND EMMETT'S NEW HOUSE - DAY

12

Emmett is measuring in the empty house, with the assistance of Ted.

EMMETT
Can you believe those dykes telling us
how we should decorate our house?
Don't they realize that Laura Ashley
went out with rotary phones?

TED
Now, now -- let's show a little
compassion. They can't help it if
they're -- "design challenged".

EMMETT
It would look stunning here.

TED
What would?

EMMETT
A chair and ottoman upholstered in dyed
lavender ostrich-skin.
(whipping out a large swath of
fabric)
What'd you think?

TED
Brings out your eyes.

EMMETT
But it's too expensive --

TED
Who cares what it costs? This isn't an
investment, it's a home. Our home.

EMMETT
This must be a fairy tale because I
married a prince!

(CONTINUED)

TED

Whatever my lamb wants, that's what my
lamb'll have.

He wraps the fabric around Emmett, gives him a kiss -- just
as JENNIFER comes down the stairs (or from another room).

JENNIFER

Oops! Sorry, guys -- just here to
report that the house inspectors seem
to be doing just fine. No major
problems so far. Knock on wood.

Just then, there's a KNOCK at the door. Jennifer goes to
the:

FRONT DOOR

opens it.

Standing there is SUNNY REED, a pretty, perky woman (not
unlike Jennifer) in her 30's, holding a cake.

SUNNY

Hi, I'm Sunny! Sunny Reed.
(making her way into the house)
Actually, it's Susanna -- but ever
since I was a baby they called me Sunny
because I always had the sunniest smile
on my face.

JENNIFER

I'm Jennifer. Ever since I was a baby
they've called me Jennifer.

SUNNY

Welcome to the neighborhood -- I just
know you're going to love it here!

JENNIFER

Thanks, but I'm the realtor, not the
new owner.

As Ted approaches.

TED

That'd be me. Ted Schmidt.

SUNNY

Hi, Ted! Sunny! Sunny Reed. My
husband and I live next door. Welcome
to the neighbourhood. I brought you a
caramel cake. I'm famous for my
caramel cake. But don't worry, Ted.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SUNNY (CONT'D)

I'll share the recipe with Mrs. Schmidt. Where is Mrs. Schmidt?

Emmett approaches, still swathed in dyed lavender faux ostrich-skin.

EMMETT

That'd be me.

A beat, as Sunny takes this in.

SUNNY

Then you're --?

EMMETT

That's right.

Sunny lives up to her name. Her smile never fades.

SUNNY

(after a beat)

Isn't that interesting? Well, I just know you're going to love it here -- everybody does. We have the best schools and churches. And we all baby-sit and look out for each other's kids--

An awkward silence. Jennifer jumps in.

JENNIFER

Sounds like a very friendly group of people -- doesn't it, guys?

TED

Very.

EMMETT

Friendly.

SUNNY

In fact, it's a tradition that we host a cocktail party, for our new arrivals. Nothing formal -- just a little "Hi, welcome to the neighborhood" kind of thing! How's Saturday around six -- right next door?

TED

Thank you -- Sunny.

SUNNY

(looking around)

It's such a lovely house.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

SUNNY (CONT'D)

The Harris' -- they lived here for years -- had the most beautiful colonial furniture and oriental rugs.

Well, I should go --

(then, remembering)

Oh -- your cake!

She hands it to "Mrs. Schmidt".

SUNNY (CONT'D)

See you Saturday.

She leaves Emmett standing there holding her famous caramel cake.

CUT TO: 

13 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

13

After dinner. Michael, Ben and Vic are at the table, having coffee and cannolis. Debbie's at the sink, cleaning up.

DEBBIE

Jen says Ted and Emmett's new house has tons of curb appeal. *

MICHAEL

(winks at Ben)

Like you.

VIC

Although why those two would want to live around a bunch of breeders is beyond me. *

BEN

There's a lot of us "moving on up" these days. *

VIC

(wary)

Give me Liberty Avenue any day. *

Debbie goes to wipe her hands, reaches for her rings (which, like all ladies, she removes before washing the dishes). One slips from her grasp, flies between the counter top and the refrigerator.

DEBBIE

Shit! My good ring just fell behind the fridge.

MICHAEL

"Good ring"?

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

That's right. The one I got off the TV.

VIC

From the Joan Rivers Collection.

DEBBIE

And don't you say a fuckin' word against her. I like that she's got a big, dirty mouth that gets her in trouble.

MICHAEL

Wonder why.

DEBBIE

Now somebody give me a hand.

She tries to move the refrigerator.

MICHAEL/VIC

Careful, Mom!/Easy, sis --

BEN

Let me do it -- you might hurt yourself.

Ben gets up, and with a couple of tugs pulls the refrigerator out from the wall. He bends down, picks up the ring, then gallantly slips it onto Debbie's finger.

DEBBIE

(practically blushing)

My hero.

(to Michael and Vic)

Now that's what I call a real man.

VIC

We could've done the same.

MICHAEL

With a forklift.

Ben pushes the refrigerator back in place with a hand from Michael and Vic, eager now to prove their strength -- "Here, let us help!" Then:

BEN

Better go wash my hands.

As he heads off for the bathroom:

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

Has Ben actually gotten bigger since the last time I saw him?

MICHAEL

He's been working out a lot.

VIC

And it shows.

DEBBIE

What's his secret?

MICHAEL

Oh, you know -- protein shakes, low carb diet, stuff like that.

Vic clues in to Michael's evasiveness, calls him on it.

VIC

Does "stuff like that" happen to be steroids?

MICHAEL

Quiet, Vic --

DEBBIE

Is that what he's doin'?

MICHAEL

He says it's to prevent wasting.

VIC

Wasting? He's built like a brick shithouse.

DEBBIE

That stuff's poison! For one thing, it makes you meaner than cat-piss. For another --

MICHAEL

For another, it's none of your concern. If that's what Ben needs to do, to stay alive and healthy, then that's all that matters.

VIC

Can't argue that.

(regarding Michael for a beat)

But are you sure that's the only reason?

CUT TO:

14 INT. VANGARD AGENCY - BRIAN'S OFFICE (OR BOARDROOM) - DAY 14

Brian, Vance, Stockwell, Nancy and Dominic are watching the ad Brian's made.

ON SCREEN

A lot of sharp, fast-paced editing, a hip SCORE. Nothing like any political advertisement anyone's ever seen. Now Stockwell breaks from the game, makes his speech:

CLOSE ON STOCKWELL

STOCKWELL ON SCREEN

(to the camera)

I'm Jim Stockwell -- Police Chief and Coach of my son's basketball team.

INTERCUT WITH BRIAN, VANCE AND THE OTHERS

watching in the dimly lit room.

STOCKWELL ON SCREEN (CONT'D)

There was a time you could send your kids to the park. Before drugs. Before illegal clubs. Before sex establishments.

THE CAMERA MOVES IN CLOSER

STOCKWELL ON SCREEN (CONT'D)

As a crime-fighter and a parent, I'd like to see those times again. I know you would, too. Vote for me for Mayor, and let's make Pittsburgh "Family Friendly" once more.

Now the camera focuses on Stockwell raising his shirt to wipe his face, revealing his stomach. Then, "STOCKWELL. THE MAN. THE MAYOR." appears over his image.

ANGLE ON BRIAN

As he FREEZES the frame with the remote. The dim lights RISE. Vance and the others are staring at the screen, their faces slack with shock. As for Brian, he simply waits.

DOMINIC

You've got to be kidding.

NANCY

It's like a music video, not a campaign advertisement.

(CONTINUED)

DOMINIC

There's no way we're going to run that.

VANCE

Perhaps if you allow Brian to explain --

He shoots Brian a very clear "This better be good" look. Brian takes a beat, then totally ignoring the naysayers, turns to Stockwell. *

BRIAN

If you want to win this election, you'd better start appealing to voters other than Republicans over the age of 65.

NANCY

It's practically obscene, showing him, revealing his -- his body, like some sort of -- sex object.

BRIAN

What do you think sells corn flakes?

He plunks a box of corn flakes on the (boardroom?) table with a male high-diver on the package.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(to Stockwell)

By the way, do you swim?

DOMINIC

I told you, listening to him was a waste of time.

Stockwell sits staring, transfixed, at his image on screen., Finally, after a long pause:

STOCKWELL

Where do you plan to air it?

BRIAN

On shows with a strong female demographic, ages 18-34.

Stockwell thinks. Decides.

STOCKWELL

All right. Do it.

NANCY

Jim, you can't--

Stockwell cuts her off.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

STOCKWELL

But if you turn me into a joke, I'll
fucking have your balls.

BRIAN

If I turn you into a joke, I'll fucking
give them to you.

CUT TO:

15 INT. TED'S CONDO - NIGHT

15

Ted comes in from a trip to Power Records, calls:

TED

Em --?

EMMETT (O.S.)

(from the bedroom)

Hi, hon -- be right out.

Ted goes to the CD player, takes out a CD, tears off the
wrapper.

TED

The new "Traviata" just came out. I
can't wait to hear it --

He's about to put it on when Emmett appears from the bedroom
in an outfit so shocking, so startling, that Ted can only
stare, speechless: crisply pressed chinos, starched blue
pinstripe Oxford button-down shirt and penny loafers. Hair
neatly combed and parted. Ted laughs out loud.

EMMETT

(after a beat, confused)

What's so funny?

TED

You! Why are you dressed like the
Brooks Brothers man? Is this some kind
of bizarro, cross-dressing practice you
engage in when I'm not around?

EMMETT

I was just putting together an outfit
for the party our neighbor's are giving
us.

TED

You'll certainly -- fit in.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

(pleased)

You think?

(then)

Oh! And check this out --

(pulling out a new set of swatches and color charts)

It's my new color scheme for the living room. Mocha walls, a chocolate mohair couch and charcoal tweed club chairs.

TED

Very smart. Very sophisticated. But not very you.

(taking the swatches out of his hands)

What happened to the plum carpet, the raspberry couch, the casaba melon pillows --

EMMETT

Peach. I hate to admit it, but maybe Mel and Linz were right -- they were too "fruity".

TED

So instead we now have Assimilatist-Beige, Blend-Right-In-Brown and Make-No-Waves-Gray.

*
*
*

EMMETT

Now that we're leaving Liberty Avenue, I figured it's time we leave certain other things behind, too.

TED

Like our identities, our color scheme, our self-respect? Whatever happened to "Fuck 'Em All Honeycutt"?

Emmett looks at Ted for a beat, then:

EMMETT

Back in Hazelhurst, I used to look up at those houses on the hill -- you know, where all the right people lived? -- and dream that someday I'd live there, too. Now that my dream's finally coming true, I don't want people thinking --

You know.

(CONTINUED)

TED

That we're the fags next door? Well, that's exactly who we're going to be -- no matter what you do. And if they don't say it to our faces, they'll say it behind our backs. That's how the world is -- we have to accept it. Just like our neighbors are going to have to accept us. Now wait there.

While Ted goes off to the bedroom, Emmett looks at his new color scheme -- it is rather drab. A beat, Ted re-enters with one of Emmett's wildest outfits. He holds it up, hand poised intentionally on one hip.

TED (CONT'D)

This is what the well-dressed queer will be wearing Saturday night.

CUT TO:

16 INT. RIPT GYM - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

16

Brian enters from the shower with a towel wrapped around his waist, stops when he sees Ben (in his clothes) and his STEROID BUDDY ROY, huddled together beside an open locker. Ben passes Roy a wad of money, who then palms a small plastic case filled with tiny bottles of Deca-Durabulon to Ben. Roy leaves. Ben turns, is about to drop the plastic case into his open gym bag when he sees Brian standing there.

BEN

Hey, I didn't see you --

BRIAN

Guess not.

BEN

(stuffing the steroids in his bag)

You don't usually work out this time of day, do you?

BRIAN

Not usually.

Brian glares at the bag, then at Ben. A beat.

BEN

Look, it's not what you think.

BRIAN

I think it's exactly what I think.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Michael told me he was going to talk to you.

BEN

He did. He understands.

BRIAN

That's Mikey. Always understanding.

BEN

So why don't you--

BRIAN

Mind my own business? If it was just you, I would. As my dear old Dad used to say, you're three-times-seven. But it's not just you. You're going to be taking him on this with you.

BEN

I don't need to be lectured by the biggest whore in Pittsburgh. You're fucking lucky you're not positive.

BRIAN

Not lucky. Smart. Unlike you, who was stupid enough to let your infected lover fuck you up the ass without a condom. Now he's dead and you're scared shitless --

BEN

Shut up!

Ben grabs Brian, slams him up against the locker, clipping his shoulder on the open locker door. Brian is momentarily stunned, but recovers.

BRIAN

Is that some Buddhist practice, or part of your new health regime?

Ben realizes what he's done, moves back from Brian.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

That's better.

Ben grabs his gym bag, leaves in a hurry. As Brian checks the bloody cut on his shoulder:

CUT TO:

17 INT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

17

The boys lie in bed naked, wearing nothing but their rings. Ethan is sucking Justin's cock. Justin's trying to get into it but it isn't really working. Ethan stops, looks up.

ETHAN

Alright?

JUSTIN

Sure.

ETHAN

Really?

Justin doesn't answer. Ethan switches positions so he can put his arms around him.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

It's the interview. "Local Boy Makes Good."

JUSTIN

I don't give a shit about that. Although Daph was pretty pissed --

ETHAN

It's just part of the deal.

JUSTIN

I know, but passing me off as your cousin?

ETHAN

I had to think of something. You just walked in --

JUSTIN

I live here, too.

(then)

So I guess this is what it's going to be like from now on -- lying, playing games --

ETHAN

We talked about it --

JUSTIN

And now you're going away.

ETHAN

To Harrisburg. For one night. It's not like it's a world tour.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

That's next.

ETHAN

I wish!

Justin shoots him a glance.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Look, who knows what's going to happen? I could bomb, and that'll be the end of it. But if this works, we could have this amazing life. I was thinking, we could buy a farmhouse, with a studio, and a practice room --

JUSTIN

Dream big.

ETHAN

Why not, it doesn't cost anything. And no one ever needs to know who I come home to.

Justin looks at him for a beat, has to laugh.

JUSTIN

God, you are such a romantic.

ETHAN

Yeah, but it's why you love me.

He offers Justin a chocolate.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Truffle?

JUSTIN

You keep feeding me those things, I'm going to turn into a fat slob.

ETHAN

More to hug.

He pulls Justin tight, kisses him.

JUSTIN

I hate that I'm not going to be there with you.

ETHAN

Not as much as me. How'll I perform without my Muse?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

JUSTIN

You'll do fine. Everyone'll love you.

ETHAN

What if I fuck up?

JUSTIN

You're not going to fuck up. Besides, you used to tell me how distracting I was.

ETHAN

Don't you know I was playing just for you?

Their eyes meet. Then their lips. Then their bodies.

CUT TO:

18 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

18

Michael has just arrived, dressed to go out. Brian, however, is not.

MICHAEL

You're not ready.

Brian says nothing.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Well, come on -- get dressed.

(playfully grabbing him)

Don't want to miss all the hot male action.

Brian removed Michael's hands, still not saying anything.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What's the matter with you?

BRIAN

(finally)

This.

Brian removes his shirt, shows Michael a nasty cut on the back of his shoulder.

MICHAEL

How'd you get that -- one of your "sex partners" get carried away?

BRIAN

More like yours.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

*

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Your boyfriend practically stuffed me into a locker at the gym.

MICHAEL

What --? How come?

BRIAN

Apparently I said something about his steroid use that he took objection to.

MICHAEL

Why'd you say anything at all?

Brian decides not to say "Because I love you and I'm around for you, dummy." Instead:

BRIAN

Because it's undignified for a university professor and not-so-best-selling author to be seen making a drug deal in a locker room.

MICHAEL

(obviously dismayed)
You saw him.

BRIAN

And now I'm forced to sit at home, rather than wearing my most fabulous new sleeveless shirt to Babylon.

MICHAEL

I'm really sorry --

BRIAN

Like that makes up for the fact that I'll probably be permanently scarred.

MICHAEL

You can tell people you got it dueling.

BRIAN

I thought you were going to talk to him!

MICHAEL

I did. He said it's something he needs to do --

BRIAN

Ben needs more muscles like I need another cock.

MICHAEL

And that he's aware of the side-effects
--

BRIAN

Like nearly murdering his lover's best friend? Well if you're cool sleeping with your eyes open and a hatchet under your pillow, that's your business. Just keep him the fuck away from me.

CUT TO:

19 EXT. ETHAN'S APARTMENT - STREET - DAY

19

Ethan's packing up his old Toyota (or Chevy, whatever).

ETHAN

Got my rented tux, my road map --
(holding up his violin case)
-- "Mischa." Guess that's everything.
(a beat, then to Justin)
Except you.

JUSTIN

(bravely)
It's okay. You'll be back tomorrow.

Ethan smiles.

ETHAN

I love stiff-upper-lip good-byes. So,
"Mrs. Miniver."

JUSTIN

Who's she?

ETHAN

An old movie. Don't you know anything?

JUSTIN

I'm an idiot.

ETHAN

Shut up.

He grabs Justin in a rough and playful hug.

JUSTIN

Careful -- there may be a paparazzi lurking on the rooftop.

ETHAN

Fuck him.

(CONTINUED)

He throws his arms around Justin, shamelessly gives him a passionate kiss, indifferent to passersby. They stand for a moment, their arms around one another.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
I'll be thinking of you, the whole time.

JUSTIN
Me, too --

ETHAN
Wishing you were there.

Ethan holds up his hand: the ring.

ETHAN (CONT'D)
And you will be.

JUSTIN
What a cornball --

ETHAN
It's why you love me.

Ethan gets in the car, starts it up.

JUSTIN
Hey!
(running over to him, then)
Don't worry about Wolfram -- I'll make sure he's fed.

Ethan drives away. As Justin watches him go, a thoughtful look on his face:

CUT TO:

20 INT. MC GLADES'S TAVERN - DAY

20

An old, downtown hangout where City Hall types have lunch. Brian, Stockwell, Vance, Dominic and Nancy are huddled in a booth. (An occasional CRONY may pass the table, acknowledging Stockwell.) Dominic brandishes a computer printout in one hand.

DOMINIC
(glancing at Brian,
incredulous)
Amazing. Just -- amazing.

NANCY
You've gone up eight points in the polls.

(CONTINUED)

DOMINIC

There was even an editorial in the paper this morning.

STOCKWELL

Good or bad.

DOMINIC

Mixed.

BRIAN

Doesn't matter. Long as they're talking about you.

NANCY

(With a certain grudging respect)

And all since your commercial aired.

BRIAN

(to Stockwell)

See, those years of sit-ups finally paid off.

VANCE

We've been getting calls about it all morning. No one's ever seen anything like it.

Stockwell lays an affectionate hand on Brian's shoulder.

STOCKWELL

I just want you to know, I had every faith in you.

BRIAN

No, you didn't. But you took a chance anyway.

VANCE

So what does our resident genius have in mind now?

BRIAN

Keep your face in the news. And I'll keep your face on the screen.

And sure enough, there ON THE TV over the bar, is Stockwell's -- or rather, Brian's -- paid political advertisement.

CUT TO:

*
*
*

21 EXT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT

21

Ted and Emmett make their way to the front door of the house.
Emmett drags his feet.

TED
Come on. We're the guests of honor.
It's rude to be late.

EMMETT
My instincts keep telling me that
things are not going to go well
tonight.

TED
Your instincts also told you that
Madonna would win the Oscar for
"Evita".

EMMETT
She sooo deserved it.

TED
Look, no matter what happens in there,
just remember -- this is what Pride is
all about. Why our forefathers and
fore--um--drag queens stood their
ground at Stonewall.
(ringing the doorbell)
Just so we could buy a house in a
neighborhood like this.

Sunny answers the door:

SUNNY
There you two are!

CUT TO:

22 INT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT

22

As Sunny leads them into the house to where the neighbors are
gathered:

SUNNY
(re: Emmett's apparel)
My goodness, look at that! Pastels
make me look dumpy. But you gays can
wear anything. You have such beautiful
bodies. You put our husbands to shame!
Speaking of the devil -- my husband,
Dennis. Den, these are our new
neighbors -- Fred and Emile!

(CONTINUED)

TED

Ted --

EMMETT

Emmett --

DENNIS

Glad you could make it. We know you boys probably have more exciting things to do on a Saturday Night --

EMMETT

Well, actually --

Ted pokes him in the ribs to shut him up. He yelps.

TED

(sotto voce)

They don't have to know about Killer Krotch Nite at Babylon.

DENNIS

How about a drink?

EMMETT

I'd give my left tit -- I mean, arm for a Cosmo.

SUNNY

(announcing)

Everyone! These are the boys who bought the Harris house!

As new neighbors approach, Ted and Emmett stiffen (and we don't mean there!)

DEDE

I'm Dede and this is Phil -- we live across the street. Sunny's told us all about you. Our favorite TV show is that gay drama -- what's it called, Phil?

PHIL

"Gay as --" something.

TED

"Gay as Blazes"?

DEDE

That's it! We love the characters. Gay people have the same problems we do.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

Isn't it amazing?

PATRICIA

We're the Mayerhoffs. You must come to the school musical. We're doing "Mame" and our twelve-year-old, Olivia, is Mame.

ANOTHER NEIGHBOR

(chiming in)

Not until they come to my house for dinner.

(proudly)

I have a cousin who's a lesbian!

YET ANOTHER NEIGHBOR

Big deal. My brother's a tranny!

ANOTHER NEIGHBOR

What the hell is that?

YET ANOTHER NEIGHBOR

(shaking his head)

Some people are so ignorant, aren't they?

(to neighbor)

A transsexual

(to his new best friends)

Right, guys?

TED AND EMMETT

Uh -- Right!

CUT TO:

23 INT. RECEPTION ROOM - NIGHT

23

The reception room of the Harrisburg concert hall. The after-concert party's in full swing; men in suits, women in black dresses sipping drinks, chatting amiably.

WE FIND Ethan, his agent, GLENN STONE, at his side, accepting handshakes and congratulations from a throng of ADMIRERS.

OLDER WOMAN

What a thrilling performance. You were so -- passionate.

ETHAN

(subtly flirting)

I tend to get involved with what I;m playing.

(CONTINUED)

DIGNIFIED GENTLEMAN

And to step in like that, at the last minute -- most impressive.

ETHAN

It was an honor to perform.

As they move along:

GLENN

You play your admirers almost as well as your violin.

ETHAN

I didn't work street corners for nothing.

GLENN

Next time, we get you a tuxedo that fits.

ETHAN

You mean there's actually going to be a next time?

Glenn gives him an amused look:

GLENN

I spoke with the Buffalo Symphony. They want to include you in their Emerging Artists Series.

ETHAN

No shit --

He excitedly grabs the CHUBBY LADY's hand who's waiting to congratulate him. Before she can even say anything:

ETHAN (CONT'D)

Thank you! Thank you very much!

GLENN

I'll call you when I get back to New York with the details.

He slaps a proud arm around his new "star", heads off -- not seeing Justin standing behind some guests. Justin waits until Glenn is gone, then steps out, starts toward Ethan. But he stops when he SEES:

(CONTINUED)

A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN -- FROM JUSTIN'S P.O.V.

approach Ethan. Justin stops to watch the exchange. The Handsome Young Man shakes Ethan's hand, speaks to him with such earnest intent ("You played so magnificently. I was so moved, I almost started to cry.") that Ethan is both charmed and captivated. He smiles, mutters some thanks back, asks the young man's name -- it's BRAD -- and then their eyes meet for just that second too long that reveals everything.

Meanwhile, Justin WATCHES all this. Ethan says some charming words -- Justin's imagining perhaps, "I saw you watching me from the audience -- you were very distracting, you know." The Young Man smiles, equally flattered, then makes a bold suggestion: "Would you like to have a drink?" Ethan hesitates, looks around -- a bit paranoid, obviously.

Justin smoothly sidesteps behind a group of people when Ethan glance his way. Ethan turns back to his soulful admirer, shakes his head, no. The Handsome Young Man looks disappointed. Justin looks relieved. The Young Man turns to leave and at that final second -- Ethan speaks his name, "Brad." He turns back, smiles as -- Justin's smile fades. He watches as Ethan whispers something to him. Then Brad leaves. Ethan takes a beat, so they're not seen leaving together. Then follows discreetly after him.

As Justin is left standing, watching:

CUT TO:

24 INT. REED HOUSE - NIGHT

24

The party continues. Ted and Emmett are the complete center of attention. The neighbors listen, enraptured.

EMMETT

-- And then I moved from Mississippi to Pittsburgh.

TED

I was born here. And once you're born here who could possibly want to leave Pittsburgh?

The neighbours all laugh, agree -- as Sunny offers a tray.

SUNNY

Cocktail frank?

TED

Thank you, Sunny --

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

I work at a small haberdashery on
Liberty Avenue.

DEDE

The gay street!

EMMETT

That's right. But I'd really like to
be a party planner --

SUNNY

Why don't you help us with our holiday
party?

DEDE

And mine!

PATRICIA

And mine!

EMMETT

I'd love to!

(to Ted)

Teddy, they like us -- they really like
us!

TED

Seems that way. And your "instincts"
told you tonight would be a disaster!

MARSHALL

And what do you do, Ted?

TED

Oh -- I run a small internet business.

EMMETT

He's sooo modest. I have to brag for
him. It's very, very successful.

Suddenly, they're interrupted by Sunny followed by TWO
UNIFORMED POLICEMEN.

SUNNY

Can I help you, officers? Is someone
double-parked?

FIRST OFFICER

We're looking for Theodore Schmidt,
Ma'am.

(CONTINUED)

SUNNY

Our new neighbor. He's right over there.

TED

Can I help you Officers?

FIRST OFFICER

You're under arrest, Mr. Schmidt.

EMMETT

Arrest?

TED

For -- what?

SECOND OFFICER

Contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

EMMETT

That's very flattering, Officer. I know I look way younger than my years, but I assure you --

FIRST OFFICER

An inspection of your pornographic website establishment found an under-age employee on your premises.

TED

That's absurd. I checked and double-checked everyone. There are no under-age employees.

SECOND OFFICER

Do you employ an Edward Stewart Malone?

TED

Eddie? He's my assistant.

SECOND OFFICER

He won't be eighteen for another three months.

TED

Eddie's twenty-one!

SECOND OFFICER

Not according to his birth certificate.

EMMETT

But -- he's so tall!

(CONTINUED)

FIRST OFFICER
(producing handcuffs)
Now you want to come along? Officer
Rodgers will read you the Miranda.

As they put the cuffs on a dazed Ted, lead him out of the house -- to the utter bewilderment and confusion of the neighbors. Emmett grabs his and Ted's coat.

EMMETT
Thank you, Sunny -- Thank you, Dennis.
Thank all of you for making this such a
memorable evening. As soon as we move
in we're going to throw a big barbecue.
You're all invited!

As he follows Ted and the Cops out of the house:

CUT TO:

25 INT. MICHAEL & BEN'S APT. - BATHROOM/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 25

It's late. Ben is bent over the toilet, retching into the bowl. Michael watches him from the open doorway with deep concern.

MICHAEL
Can I do anything?

BEN
It's just a reaction to one of my
drugs.

Ben stands, rinses his mouth, slaps cold water on his face.

MICHAEL
You stopped reacting to the new
cocktail weeks ago.

BEN
Then it must be something I ate.

MICHAEL
(beat)
Or the steroids.

Ben turns the water off.

BEN
We've already had that conversation.

He walks out of the bathroom, past Michael. Michael follows him into:

(CONTINUED)

THE LIVING ROOM

Ben sits on the sofa, holds his stomach, still feeling shitty.

MICHAEL

It's fucking you up.

BEN

It's not fucking me up.

MICHAEL

Yeah, it is. And you don't even know it. Christ, you even hit Brian.

BEN

I didn't hit him!

MICHAEL

Shoved him, whatever -- made him bleed!
You can't go around pushing people,
acting crazy!

*
*
*

BEN

Now I'm crazy. Fuck you!

MICHAEL

You're not crazy. But sometime you act
crazy.

Ben's had enough. He rises from the couch, heads toward the
bedroom with a dismissive wave.

BEN

You don't understand anything.

MICHAEL

Understand what?

*
*

BEN

(in a rage)

What it's like to wake up every morning
and remember, "Oh yeah, I've got this
thing." Because you don't have this
thing! You don't take a mouthful of
meds, never knowing when they'll stop
working, never knowing when a fucking
cough or a fucking snuffle may land you
in the hospital -- because to you it is
just a fucking cough or a fucking
snuffle!

*
*
*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED: (2)

25

BEN (CONT'D)

And every time I go to kiss you or suck you or fuck you, even when we're protected, even then there's still this awful, shitty nagging doubt that maybe - just maybe -- you could get infected. Sometimes I just think--

*
*

He stops himself.

MICHAEL

Sometimes you just think what?

*

Finally, he says it.

*

BEN

That it might just be easier to be with someone who's positive.

*
*

CUT TO:

26

INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

26

It's very late. Almost closing time. Still, there're boys on their way to Babylon, boys who've come with their tricks for a nightcap before heading home to fuck.

*
*

ENTER JUSTIN

*

weary from the long drive home. There's a strange solace -- almost comfort -- for him, coming here. He sits at the bar. Naturally, guys cruise him. One tries to hit on him. He's in no mood, waves him away. He orders a drink. A strong one. He takes a gulp, hears:

*
*
*

BRIAN (O.S.)

Buy you another?

Justin turns, looks up, sees:

BRIAN

Standing over him. The last person he wanted to see.

JUSTIN

No thanks.

*
*

BRIAN

Where's your fiancée?

*

JUSTIN

(after a beat)

Playing, somewhere.

*

Brian takes his hand -- the one with the ring.

*

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

You have this -- to think of him.

Brian releases his hand, moves on. Justin picks up his drink, drains it, signals the bartender to bring him another. Then he sits there, alone, playing with the ring Ethan gave him, the ring that binds them even when they're apart. The bartender brings him another. As Justin knocks that one back, too --

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*

FADE OUT.

THE END