

# queer as folk

EPISODE 311

Teleplay By  
Brad Fraser

Story By  
Ron Cowen & Daniel Lipman & Brad Fraser

Executive Producers

Ron Cowen  
Daniel Lipman  
Tony Jonas

PRODUCTION DRAFT (WHITE) 02-03-2003

Producer

Sheila Hockin

**COWLIP**  
PRODUCTIONS

**TONY JONAS**  
PRODUCTIONS

**TEMPLE STREET**  
PRODUCTIONS

THIS SCREENPLAY IS THE SOLE PROPERTY OF SHOWTIME NETWORKS, INC. NO PORTION MAY BE DISCUSSED, PUBLISHED, REFORMATTED, REPRODUCED, SOLD, USED BY ANY MEANS, QUOTED, COMMUNICATED OR OTHERWISE DISSEMINATED OR PUBLICIZED IN ANY FORM OR MEDIA, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION, IN ANY WRITTEN ARTICLE, TELEVISION AND/OR RADIO INTERVIEW OR ON THE INTERNET, WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT OF SHOWTIME NETWORKS, INC.

NO ONE IS AUTHORIZED TO DISPOSE OF SAME.

IF LOST OR DESTROYED, PLEASE NOTIFY THE STORY DEPARTMENT AT SHOWTIME NETWORKS,  
10880 WILSHIRE BLVD., SUITE 1600, LOS ANGELES, CA 90024  
TEL. 310.234.5200

© 2003

# queerasfolk

EPISODE 311

---

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  
DAPHNE CHANDERS.....Makyla Smith  
VIC GRASSI.....Jack Wetherall  
JENNIFER TAYLOR.....Sherry Miller  
GARDNER VANCE.....Carlo Rota  
JIM STOCKWELL.....David Gianopoulos  
HUNTER.....Harris Allan

and as

DEBBIE NOVOTNY.....Sharon Gless

---

GUEST CAST

GUS	ROMAN
LEATHER DADDY	TANNIS
DOMINIC SCOLOTTO	PHILLIP
NANCY HENDERSON	CONSERVATIVE GAY MAN
DR. C	MAN IN CAR
DEREK	CYNTHIA

---

FADE IN:

1 ~~EXT. THE TRUCKS -- NIGHT~~ 1

A parking lot in a Warehouse district. Rows of large trucks -  
- eighteen wheelers, big rigs. Seemingly devoid of human  
life. Suddenly, two figures appear, bundled against the  
cold. REVEAL

BRIAN AND JUSTIN

making their way down a narrow aisle between the parked  
vehicles.

JUSTIN  
Where the fuck are we?

BRIAN  
My guess, Altoona.

JUSTIN  
How'd you hear about this place?

BRIAN  
I read about it in "O".

JUSTIN  
And I thought it was all douche ads.

BRIAN  
I'll have to get you a subscription for  
your birthday.

They stop at a long truck with "PITTSBURGH POWERTOOL"  
emblazoned along the side in BIG LETTERS. Brian smiles.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Something tells me this is it.

He raps on the metal door at the rear of the truck.

A few beats, then the truck door slides up with a loud  
metallic grinding sound, music from a make-shift sound system  
BLARES out. A BIG, SCARY LEATHER DADDY IN DARK GLASSES  
glares down at them.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
(offering the secret words)  
We're here for the Feldman bar mitzvah.

The leather daddy signals them to come in. Brian leaps up  
onto the tailgate nimbly, pulls Justin up after him. As the  
leather daddy yanks the truck door closed with a LOUD CLANK:

CUT TO:

2

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

2

The truck is packed with HOT GUYS -- some naked (despite the cold), some partially dressed. Soft moans, wet groans, plumes of hot breath rise in frosty air as they go at it. Brian and Justin find a vacant spot along one side of the truck.

JUSTIN  
(politely)  
Excuse us -- pardon us --

Taking their place, they unbutton each other's coats, shirts, pants, start kissing passionately. Justin has his hand between Brian's legs.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Your cock's really hard.

BRIAN  
Try frozen solid.

Justin is about to go down on him, hesitates.

JUSTIN  
You don't suppose my tongue'll stick to it?

Taking his chances, he goes down on it, backing Brian's bare ass against the ice-cold metal wall.

BRIAN  
Yeow!

JUSTIN  
You okay?

BRIAN  
That metal's fucking freezing!

JUSTIN  
This sucks.

BRIAN  
And not in a positive, life-affirming way.

JUSTIN  
There must be somewhere else to go --

Off his look:

CUT TO:

3

INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

3

Brian is fucking Justin doggy style on the bed. Loud, sweaty, they come violently. Justin collapses with Brian on top of him. They breathe heavily as Brian pulls out, yanks the condom off.

JUSTIN

That was great.

BRIAN

Amazing.

JUSTIN

And climate controlled.

BRIAN

Still, I miss the back room.

(beat)

Desperately.

JUSTIN

I have to confess, I was fantasizing about the orgy pit at the baths.

Brian sits up, lights a cigarette. Laughs quietly.

BRIAN

I guess Stockwell's finally done it.

JUSTIN

Done what?

BRIAN

Forced us to stay home and fuck in our beds like straight people.

Justin slips his arms around Brian's neck.

JUSTIN

You're the one who's helped him turn us into law-abiding heterosexuals.

BRIAN

Call me Doctor Spin.

JUSTIN

You could be Doctor Evil.

Brian ponders for a beat.

BRIAN

You know, you're a very bad boy for suggesting such a thing.

(CONTINUED)

3

CONTINUED:

3

Justin moves closer to Brian, visions of naughtiness dance in his head.

JUSTIN

Guess you'd better spank me.

Brian pulls Justin onto his lap, begins to fulfill his fantasies:

CUT TO:

4

INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

4

Very early morning. MICHAEL and BEN are the only legit looking customers in the place. The rest of the booths are filled with drug-soaked club kids, street hustlers just finishing the graveyard shift and overly buffed thirty-something tweakers, still up from the night before. DEBBIE is serving the guys coffee.

DEBBIE

What the hell are you two doing here this early?

MICHAEL

Ben had us up all night, prowling down every back street in the city.

DEBBIE

And when did you two turn into a couple of alley cats?

MICHAEL

We didn't.

BEN

We're trying to find this kid --

MICHAEL

The one we brought in here last week.

DEBBIE

I remember.

(sadly)

Seemed like God must've forgotten about him.

MICHAEL

Ben hasn't.

BEN

I have to tell him some news.

(beat)

He's positive.

(CONTINUED)

Debbie sets the coffee pot down, sinks into the chair across from the guys, shocked.

DEBBIE

Christ, he's just a kid.

(then)

But why do you have to tell him?

MICHAEL

It's a long story --

BEN

He was in the hospital -- he gave them my name -- said I was his uncle.

MICHAEL

And Ben went along with it.

BEN

He didn't want to get put back into the Foster Care system.

DEBBIE

So now all of a sudden you're responsible? You know you could get into some pretty serious trouble messing around in this kid's life!

MICHAEL

(re: Ben)

Tell him.

DEBBIE

I just did.

BEN

Then again, maybe we can help him. That is, if we can find him.

DEBBIE

Why didn't you ask me? I can tell you where to look.

MICHAEL

You can?

DEBBIE

Sweetheart, check out the clientele. Who the fuck d'you think comes in here this time of morning? Boys who've been working the night shift. From what I hear, they've all moved over to the warehouse district.

(CONTINUED)

As Debbie moves on and Michael and Ben exchange a look --

BEN  
Mother knows best --

CUT TO:

5 INT. MELANIE'S & LINDSAY HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY 5

MELANIE and LINDSAY have laid out a nice brunch for TED and EMMETT. Ted's eyes are on his plate. There's no conversation. Awkward silence. Emmett, Melanie and Lindsay exchange a glance. Finally:

LINDSAY  
Who wants another waffle? Ted --?

TED  
Sure. Why not?

EMMETT  
(passing his plate)  
Me, too! They're yummy -- what's your secret?

LINDSAY  
A waffle iron and waffle mix?

EMMETT  
I'll have to remember that!  
(adding, brightly)  
And how nice to have someone plan a meal for me for a change.

MELANIE  
So things are going well?

EMMETT  
At least two events a week. I finally gave my notice to Torso. Auf weidersehen, au revoir and good riddance to peddling polyester pullovers to tweaked-out club boys!

LINDSAY  
Teddy, what about you? What have you been up to?

TED  
(not looking up)  
Me? Oh, the usual.  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TED (CONT'D)

Re-reading Schopenhauer, working on my Theory of Post-Neo-Relativity and I think I've discovered a new black hole between Jupiter and Pluto. Pass the syrup?

As Lindsay does so:

LINDSAY

You know, Mel and I were thinking --

MELANIE

That if you could spare the time --

LINDSAY

You might help us.

Slowly, Ted looks up from his plate.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

You see, we've managed, believe it or not, to actually save a little bit of cash --

MELANIE

And we'd like to start a college fund for Gus.

EMMETT

What a wonderful idea!

LINDSAY

But it'll need to be managed properly by someone we can trust.

MELANIE

Someone like you.

TED

Me?

MELANIE

Considering how many times you saved my ass on taxes, not to mention the amazing program you put us on so that Linz could stay home with the baby --

LINDSAY

-- you'd be the perfect person.

MELANIE

We want to start with five thousand dollars.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

And add to it when we can.

MELANIE

So what do you say -- Ted Schmidt,  
Financial Wizard?

TED

Uh -- yeah -- sure. We could ladder it  
with solid bonds. I'd stay away from  
the market for now. But if there's  
stability at some point, I wouldn't be  
adverse to investing in some blue  
chips.

EMMETT

Listen to him!

LINDSAY

Teddy knows!

MELANIE

He sure does! So what do you say?

Ted looks at them for a beat, then:

TED

Sure.

As the gals hug and squeeze him -- "That's great!":

CUT TO:

6 INT. VANGARD AGENCY - BOARDROOM - DAY

6

A large boardroom at the agency. Brian is pitching his final  
commercial idea for JIM STOCKWELL's campaign to Jim and his  
aids, DOMINIC and NANCY.

BRIAN

Since it'll be the last spot before the  
election, I want to do something broad-  
sweeping, epic.

DOMINIC

"Lord of the Rings" in thirty seconds?

BRIAN

(ignoring the ha-ha funny joke)  
Something that'll place you in the  
context of the entire city. A man for  
all the people.

(CONTINUED)

STOCKWELL

I get it. Showing me with as many racially and culturally diverse groups as possible.

BRIAN

Exactly.

NANCY

Actually, that's not a bad idea.

BRIAN

I don't have bad ideas. In case you haven't noticed.

(then, to Stockwell)

I also want the cameras with you at all times. We'll get you at the Asian Cultural Society, the Hispanic Institute, the Gay and Lesbian Center --

Dominic cuts Brian off.

DOMINIC

The Gay and Lesbian Center?

JIM

I'm not too popular in that neck of the woods.

NANCY

Perhaps we should scratch that one.

BRIAN

Let's not be too hasty.

(to Jim)

They did endorse you, after all. And, who knows, when it comes down to election day, it could be those few extra votes that tip things in your favor.

DOMINIC

Wouldn't that be a laugh -- if it were the gays who put you in office!

NANCY

The polls do show the race is getting tighter.

Brian offers his final word on the matter.

BRIAN

Go kiss some hands. Shake some babies.

(CONTINUED)

Jim deliberates for a moment -- then nods.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - DAY

7

As Ted and Emmett walk down the street:

EMMETT

Wasn't it sweet of the girls to have us over? And how about them asking you to manage Gus's college fund?

TED

Yeah. How about that.

(after a beat)

So how long have the three of you been planning this?

EMMETT

Not long. I mean -- they mentioned something when they called to invite us to brunch --

TED

And you, no doubt, thought it was a splendid idea to invent a little project to keep Teddy busy, is that it?

EMMETT

No, that's not it. They're your friends. And considering it's their son's future, they obviously trust you -

Just then, Mark Burgess (we'll now call him DR. CRYSTAL or DR. C.) from the Paradise Motel and his two FRIENDS appear. Rail-thin, translucent skin, wearing sunglasses, they look like the undead.

DR. C

Ted --! Hey, man --!

TED

(nervous, but covering)

Oh, hi --

DR. C

This is Derek and Roman --

TED

This is Emmett -- my partner.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

EMMETT

I prefer lover. I know it's not P.C.  
to say that anymore -- but I don't give  
a shit.

(then)

You boys coming back from Babylon?

So speedy he could win the Indy 500:

DR. C

They shut down the back room, can you  
believe it? So we're going to my place  
to fuck.

EMMETT

That's nice --

DR. C

Hey, you guys want to "cum"?

Derek and Roman think this is hilarious.

TED

Uh -- no, thanks. Some other time. So  
long.

As they go on their way:

EMMETT

He seemed really tweaked out. How do  
you know him, anyway?

TED

He's an ear, nose and throat  
specialist. I went to him once to have  
my sinuses drained.

EMMETT

Until you just said that, the scariest  
thing I ever imagined was my parents  
having sex.

As they continue to walk, Ted discreetly glances over his  
shoulder at Dr. C and his pals. Dr. C suddenly glances back,  
gives him a seductive smile. As Ted quickly turns back,  
keeps walking:

CUT TO:

8 INT. GAY AND LESBIAN CENTER - NIGHT

8

An auditorium filled with foldout chairs. Stockwell stands on a small stage at one end of the room before a podium with a mike. TANNIS and PHILLIP stand on one side of him, Nancy and Dominic on the other. Every chair in the room is filled.

Brian stands at the back of the room watching from a discreet corner. There are A LARGE NUMBER OF MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES present with cameras and microphones, recording the event.

A VERY CONSERVATIVE LOOKING GAY MAN IN HIS EARLY FORTIES raises his hand, is called upon, rises, speaks to Stockwell, who listens politely.

CONSERVATIVE GAY MAN

I just wanted to say Chief Stockwell, that I totally support your efforts to make Liberty Avenue a decent and respectable place to live.

STOCKWELL

Well, thank you very much.

CONSERVATIVE GAY MAN

But I was wondering why it takes the police so long to respond. My townhouse was broken into a couple of months ago. I called and the police didn't show up for two hours.

STOCKWELL

Unfortunately, the current mayor cut my department's budget. But when I'm elected, I can guarantee you a greater police presence on Liberty Avenue.

Brian and Justin share a look -- they know only too well what that means.

TANNIS

Any other questions for the Chief?

Brian nods almost imperceptibly to Justin, who gives DAPHNE a nod. Daphne stands, holds her placard in the air. The placard has a picture of a pretty young Hispanic woman on it.

DAPHNE

Margarita Lopez.

Stockwell looks a little confused. The name rings a bell but he doesn't know why.

(CONTINUED)

STOCKWELL

Excuse me --?

DAPHNE

Margarita Lopez was a transsexual. She was murdered five years ago. Her killers have never been found.

Stockwell looks relieved. A nut case. He knows how to deal with this. Speaking in a smooth, paternal manner:

STOCKWELL

The Pittsburgh P.D. does its best to solve every crime. However, there is always the occasional --

Lindsay suddenly stands, also brandishing a placard: it shows the picture of a very young black man.

LINDSAY

Jefferson Proctor. Shot to death half a block from Woody's. Crime unsolved.

Now Melanie stands with a placard: it shows a middle-aged white woman.

MELANIE

Natasha Ginsburg. A lesbian out walking her dog. Stabbed to death. Killer still at large.

The buzz in the room is growing. JENNIFER stands displaying a placard of an old high school photo of a younger Justin.

JENNIFER

Justin Taylor. My beautiful gay son. Attacked at his prom. Left for dead. The police reported it as simple assault, instead of a hate crime -- which it was. His attacker got off with community service.

As the crowd becomes more agitated, Stockwell holds up his hands, appeals for quiet.

STOCKWELL

Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to thank these concerned citizens for reminding me of the violence that threatens -- and sometimes claims the lives of members of this community. However, the vast majority of violent crimes are solved, and the criminals apprehended --

(CONTINUED)

Debbie rises. She has one more question.

DEBBIE  
What about him?

She holds up a picture of Jason Kemp. Stockwell looks at the crime photo. A fleeting look of distress crosses his face. Definitely not something he wants to see -- or perhaps wishes to remember.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)  
Did you do your best for him?

STOCKWELL  
I remember that boy. His murder was tragic. Someone so young --

Debbie challenges him.

DEBBIE  
Then what was his name?

Stockwell falters. He's gone too far in his own rhetoric, trapped himself. Brian and Justin watch him twist with a glimmer of enjoyment.

STOCKWELL  
I may not recall his name, but I do know --

DEBBIE  
Jason Kemp! His name was Jason Kemp and the reason you don't remember him is because no one on your police force knew who he was. I found out. Not the police. Me. The waitress who discovered his body in the dumpster behind the diner where I work. Jason Kemp: AKA Dumpster Boy. Murder unsolved.

The audience is mesmerized by Debbie's genuine emotion as she turns, displays the placard to the room. Stockwell stands watching, not knowing what to do.

Nancy moves to Tannis, whispers in her ear. Tannis quickly goes to the microphone.

TANNIS  
We'd like to thank our guest, Police Chief Jim Stockwell, for coming tonight, and to invite everyone to stay for coffee.

(CONTINUED)

Stockwell moves to Phillip, whispers through teeth clenched in a smile.

STOCKWELL

Where's the back door?

PHILLIP

There is no back door.

STOCKWELL

How the hell do I get out of here?

DOMINIC

The same way you came in sir. Sorry.

Stockwell gives them a scathing look, steps off of the stage, makes his way down the aisle, camera crews hot on his tail. Standing directly in his path is Justin. Their eyes meet. Stockwell knows him from somewhere (Brian's office) but can't place him -- yet. He pushes past -- or rather has his two POLICE ESCORTS do it for him. Then he heads to the door, where Brian is waiting, oh so conciliatory.

BRIAN

Jim, I had no idea --

Stockwell stops, looks at him -- then fleetingly looks at Justin. And in that one brief moment -- CLICK -- he remembers where he saw Justin. As he rushes out, Brian and Justin -- unaware of Stockwell's shock of recognition -- exchange a secret smile: Mission Accomplished.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The warehouse district. Dead streets, devoid of light. Cars circle slowly, headlights piercing the fog. Dark silhouettes of young men move in the shadows, like ghostly spectres.

FIND MICHAEL AND BEN

walking down the street, hunched against the cold.

MICHAEL

We've been up and down these streets a dozen times.

BEN

Once more.

MICHAEL

That's what you said an hour ago.

(CONTINUED)

BEN  
I'm sure he's here.

MICHAEL  
Maybe he got lucky. Some nice, rich  
sugar daddy took him home, wrapped him  
in a cashmere comforter, is feeding him  
lobster bisque soup --

BEN  
What vivid imagery.

MICHAEL  
It's what happens in stage one  
hypothermia -- you start hallucinating.

BEN  
(cutting him off)  
Look. There he is.

Sure enough, there's Hunter. He stands leaning into a parked  
car -- his thin coat barely protection against the frigid  
weather.

MICHAEL  
No lobster bisque.

BEN  
Not even chicken noodle.

Ben goes up to Hunter. The kid's in the midst of a  
negotiation with an OVERWEIGHT, BALDING, MIDDLE-AGED MAN in a  
sedan. As Michael hangs back, Ben interrupts.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I've been looking for you.

MAN IN CAR  
Christ -- the cops!

Hunter tries to calm his potential trick.

HUNTER  
He's not the fucking cops --

But the bald man's too nervous to listen. He takes off with  
a squeal of tires.

HUNTER (CONT'D)  
Why is it every time you show up you  
cost me money? He was even willing to  
spring for a hotel room!

(CONTINUED)

BEN  
It's important.

Hunter seriously doubts it.

HUNTER  
Everything with you's important.

Michael joins them.

MICHAEL  
You should listen to him.

HUNTER  
(sighs, impatiently)  
Now what?

A beat, then:

BEN  
When you were in the hospital, they  
tested you for HIV. It turns out  
you're positive.

Hunter stares at Ben for a moment, blankly, his eyes  
betraying nothing.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Look, I know it's upsetting. But the  
good news is you're healthy. Your  
viral load is still undetectable. And  
with all the new advances --

HUNTER  
(cutting him off)  
Thanks for the info.

The kid starts to walk away.

MICHAEL  
Hey! Don't you even care?

Hunter turns back to them, indifferently.

HUNTER  
That I have AIDS?

BEN  
I didn't say AIDS, I said HIV --

HUNTER  
What's the difference? Either way I'm  
gonna die.

(CONTINUED)

BEN  
That's not true.

HUNTER  
Well so what if I do? You think I give  
a shit?

MICHAEL  
You should. It's your life.

HUNTER  
You call this a life? You think I'm  
stupid?  
(then)  
So I have it. Most of the guys out  
here already do. It's no big deal.

BEN  
It's a very big deal. You have to  
learn to take care of yourself --

HUNTER  
Fuck off. I have work to do.

Michael grabs him, stops him.

MICHAEL  
If you don't care about yourself, what  
about others? You could be infecting  
the people you sleep with.

HUNTER  
You pays ya' money, you takes ya'  
chances.

Hunter walks into the approaching headlights without looking  
back.

As Ben watches him disappear into the night:

CUT TO:

10 INT. TED'S CONDO - NIGHT

10

Emmett and Vic are working in the kitchen. As Vic takes out  
a cookie sheet of cheese puffs:

VIC  
This pastry would be a helluva lot  
crisper with a convection oven.

EMMETT  
Well mister, the Kitchen Fairy just may  
grant you your wish!  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

EMMETT (CONT'D)

After this next party, I'll have saved up enough to afford one.

VIC

Now we're cookin'! Can you think of anything worse than a soggy cheese puff?

EMMETT

As hard as I try, absolutely nothing comes to mind.

FIND Ted on the Internet, checking out investments for Gus's college fund. He's making notes, adding up figures. His fingers caress his calculator like a virtuoso playing his instrument. Suddenly, an IM pops up on the screen -- with a "jpg" of it's sender, Dr. Crystal: "Hey, Tedster. Nice to run into u today. Whatcha up to tonight?" Ted reads it nervously, as Emmett comes over with a cheese puff:

EMMETT (CONT'D)

One tasty tart deserves another!

Ted quickly deletes Dr. C's message:

TED

Uh -- no, thanks.

EMMETT

Now, now -- one's never too busy for a blue cheese and pear puff.

He pops it into Ted's mouth, who quickly fans his burning tongue.

TED

Aieeee!

EMMETT

Careful -- don't burn your tongue.

TED

Now you tell me?

Emmett gives Ted a smooch, goes back to Vic, as Ted drains his coffee mug, goes back his work.

EMMETT

(aside to Vic)

God bless Mel and Linz for asking him to manage Gus's college fund -- it's made all the difference.

VIC

He just needed to feel "invested".

(CONTINUED)

Emmett smiles -- the perfect word. As Ted continues to work, another IM from Dr. C pops up: "Party tonight at my place. Want to see Tina?" Ted nervously looks over, sees Emmett occupied. He quickly types in a response: "Sorry, no can do." Dr. C responds: "If you change your mind, we'll be waiting for you." Ted clicks off, starts to sweat. Suddenly, he jumps up, exclaims:

TED

What do you say we all go out tonight?  
The Pittsburgh Civic Opera's doing all  
twenty hours of Wagner's Ring Cycle!

EMMETT

Maybe if it were Wagner's Cock Ring  
Cycle --

As he and Vic laugh:

TED

A movie, then. There's a Douglas Sirk  
Retrospective at the Regency --

EMMETT

(jokingly)  
Sweetie, my life is a Lana Turner movie  
-- I don't need to see one.

TED

Dinner, then! I read about this great  
new restaurant --

VIC

The last thing I want to look at is  
food. Anyway, I'm meeting Rodney later  
for a game of Strip Scrabble.

EMMETT

Why don't you call Michael and Ben, or  
Brian, -- see what they're up to?  
You've been in all day. Go out. Have  
some fun.

As Ted takes an anxious breath:

CUT TO:

11 INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

11

The gang from the Center: Debbie, Jennifer, Daphne, Lindsay, Melanie and Justin are gathered around a stand-up table. Brian's nearby, playing pool. Debbie raises her draft glass in a toast. The others follow suit.

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

Here's to nailing that motherfucker!

"Hear! Hear!"

DAPHNE

It'll be all over the news for sure.

MELANIE

The gay community bashes back!

JENNIFER

And we have none other to thank than my brilliant, talented son!

LINDSAY

It was a brilliant idea -- researching those unsolved crimes.

DEBBIE

How'd you do it, Sunshine?

JUSTIN

I have my "Deep Throat".

He glances at BRIAN -- who chugs his beer and feigns interest in a passing CUTIE.

DEBBIE

(holding up her placard of  
Jason Kemp)

I'm going to put this up in the diner until this election's over.

JENNIFER

Good for you. Don't let them forget.

As the others continue to congratulate themselves, Debbie goes over to Brian, as he scores a ball in a corner pocket.

BRIAN

Yesss!

DEBBIE

(curiously)

You don't seem too upset.

BRIAN

About what?

DEBBIE

We just exposed your boy's considerable shortcomings -- in full view of the press.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

(shrugs)

Every politician has to deal with the lunatic fringe.

Debbie regards his studied nonchalance for a beat.

DEBBIE

You know, in the old days, before you sold your soul for a sack of gold, you'd've been the one who laid the trap for Stockwell. In fact, it had the "hand of the master" written all over it. But I guess those days are gone.

Brian smiles to himself -- sinks another ball in the corner pocket -- as Michael joins them.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

Where the fuck were you? You didn't make it to the Center.

MICHAEL

I was with Ben, looking for Hunter.

BRIAN

You missed quite a show. Your Mom does a great Norma Rae.

He demonstrates the famous holding-up-the-placard-over-the-head routine.

DEBBIE

Did you find him?

MICHAEL

(nods)

Ben told him he's positive. He didn't even care.

BRIAN

He's a fuckin' hustler -- what did you expect?

DEBBIE

At his age, he probably doesn't even realize the consequences.

MICHAEL

Well you'd think he'd at least have shown some gratitude, for us trying to help him.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

I'm sure he'll write you a thank you note, first chance he gets.

DEBBIE

(patting Michael's cheek)

That was a very loving thing you did, sweetheart -- whether some people think so or not.

She gives Brian a look, goes off.

BRIAN

If you're done doing your good deed, how about picking up a cue?

As Michael joins the game:

MICHAEL

You know, we're lucky.

BRIAN

That our hairline hasn't started to recede?

MICHAEL

That no matter how much you hated your parents, or how much my Mom drives me crazy, at least they didn't give us away.

BRIAN

Speak for yourself.

As he smashes another ball:

CUT TO:

12 EXT. WAREHOUSE DISTRICT - NIGHT

12

The weather's gotten worse. (If it's not snowing or raining, the wind is howling) Ben, carrying something bulky in a bag, has returned to find Hunter. The street is emptier now. Fewer cars. A couple of die-hard hustlers stand shivering in their leather jackets. In an alley, some other boys huddle around a garbage can with a small fire burning.

Ben sees Hunter in a recessed doorway, lighting a cigarette. He moves to join him. Hunter, seeing Ben, rolls his eyes, looks away.

BEN

That coat doesn't look very warm.

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER  
It's warm enough.

He sneezes. Ben hands him a crumpled Kleenex from his pocket.

BEN  
Bless you.

HUNTER  
Did you already blow your nose in it?

BEN  
No, I did not.

Hunter takes it warily, then blows.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I have an old downfill here -- still in good shape.

Hunter looks at Ben, incredulously.

HUNTER  
No one wants to pick up a guy in a downfill!

BEN  
No one wants to pick up a guy who's going to give them HIV, either.  
(giving him a box of condoms)  
So make sure you use these. And make sure they use them too -- even if they do offer to pay you two hundred dollars.

Hunter looks at the box for a beat -- then hurls it furiously at the wall. Just then, a car cruises slowly by. Hunter runs after it, calling:

HUNTER  
Hey, wait! Come back!

But the vehicle continues on. Hunter stands there, watching it drive out of sight. Then he turns on Ben, raging:

HUNTER (CONT'D)  
Get the fuck out of here! Leave me alone!

BEN  
Fine.

(CONTINUED)

He shoves the bag containing the jacket against Hunter's chest, leaving him no choice but to grasp it. Then he turns, starts to walk away.

A beat, then Hunter calls after him.

HUNTER

.Hey!

Ben stops, turns back. Hunter demands:

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Why are you doing this? Why do you even care?

Ben replies, calmly:

BEN

Because I'm positive, too.

CUT TO:

Crystal meth bubbles under the flame in The bowl of a glass pipe. Several guys (including Derek and Roman) are smoking and going at each other in the good doctor's expensively decorated den. A HAND (DR. C's) reaches over to extend the pipe to someone who is hidden behind a guy giving another guy head. REVEAL that it's Ted. He takes the pipe from Dr. C..

DR. C

Thought you had to be with your boyfriend.

TED

He's planning a party.

DR. C

Couldn't be as hot as this one.

TED

Just the blue cheese and pear puffs.

He laughs at his private joke. A few of the fucked-out others start to laugh, too -- although they haven't a clue why.

DR. C

Speaking of parties --  
(announcing to the room)  
It's White Party Weekend!

(CONTINUED)

TED  
Yeah? Where?

DR. C  
Where else? P.S., I love you.  
(off Ted's look)  
Palm Springs! The desert!

DEREK  
(chiming in)  
Hot, hot, hot!

DR. C  
That's correct, darling. The hottest  
music, the hottest drugs, the hottest  
boys --  
(back to Ted)  
Wanna go?

Ted thinking this is a joke, gets a good chuckle out of it.

TED  
To a circuit party in Palm Springs?

DR. C  
Have you ever been to a circuit party  
in Palm Springs?

Ted shakes his head.

TED  
No --

DR. C  
Then let me tell you about it.

Dr. C moves closer, puts his arms around him, seductively:

DR. C (CONT'D)  
Imagine tens of thousands of the most  
gorgeous looking men you've ever seen.  
You'll get hard the second you walk  
through the door. And favors. Any  
kind you want, any time you want.  
You're floating. You're horny.  
(grabbing Roman's dick as he  
passes)  
And wherever you turn, there's somebody  
there to suck it or stroke it. And the  
weather! Fuck this snow and sleet  
shit. There's a soft breeze blowing,  
even at two in the morning. And  
everything's white, white, white. So  
white it glows.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

DR. C (CONT'D)

It's more than an oasis, it's -- well, it's heaven. And if the real heaven isn't anything like it -- it damn well should be.

TED

Sounds amazing, but --

DR. C

But what? It's all there, waiting for us. I just have to pick up the phone, call my travel agent. He'll get us a great deal. I'm tefloning his nose. Nasty coke habit. Won't cost more than a few thou. You can spare a few thou, can't you?

As he offers Ted another hit:

CUT TO:

14 INT. MICHAEL'S APT - NIGHT

14

Ben is heating soup on the stove. He fills a bowl, takes it to the table where: Hunter is revealed, sitting there. Ben hands him the bowl.

BEN

Have some Miso soup.

HUNTER

(turning up his nose)  
What's that?

BEN

Japanese chicken soup. Just eat it.

Warily, Hunter takes a sip. Not so bad. Then:

HUNTER

So how long have you had it?

BEN

I tested positive three years ago. So far, knock wood, I've been healthy.

HUNTER

Then what's the big deal?

BEN

Staying that way. It takes a lot more work than you think.

(beat)

Not to mention dealing with the social and psychological ramifications.

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER

I'm a kid, remember? You mind talking down to me?

BEN

You know what I'm saying.

HUNTER

I don't want to talk about it.

BEN

I understand. But at some point, you're going to have to.

Michael walks in.

MICHAEL

Hey. Sorry I'm late. I was over at Woody's with --

He stops when he sees Hunter.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

-- everyone.

BEN

Come on in.

Michael reacts to the strange invitation -- considering it's his home.

MICHAEL

Thanks.

(then)

I didn't realize we had company.

BEN

I offered Hunter something hot to eat.

(beat)

And a place to crash.

If Michael strained any harder, he'd burst a hemorrhoid.

MICHAEL

That was a very loving thing you did --  
sweetheart.

As Hunter gives Michael a surly glance, slurps his soup:

CUT TO:

Michael and Ben are undressing for bed.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL  
I can't believe you're doing this.

BEN  
(correcting him)  
"We're" doing this.

MICHAEL  
(correcting him back)  
No, "you're" doing this. What the hell  
did you tell him?

BEN  
That he could stay here.

MICHAEL  
For how long?

BEN  
I didn't give it a time limit.

MICHAEL  
Well, we're not China. There's no Open  
Door Policy!

Ben starts to laugh.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
What's so funny?

BEN  
That's such a mother thing to say.  
Your mother must've said that.

Michael proudly defends Debbie's good name -- if not her  
intelligence.

MICHAEL  
My mother never heard of the Open Door  
Policy. And that's not the point.

BEN  
The point is, he just got out of the  
hospital. He just found out he's  
positive. Am I supposed to let him  
sleep on the street on one of the  
coldest nights of the year?

Michael pauses, then:

MICHAEL  
No. Of course not. I just want to  
know what you plan to do.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

I don't know. Right now, I'm offering a helping hand to someone who needs it.

MICHAEL

You hardly know him.

BEN

Actually, we're related.

(beat)

By blood.

Michael looks at Ben for a beat. When he puts it like that, it all makes sense. He goes to him, hugs him.

BEN (CONT'D)

It's the right thing, Michael. We have to do it.

Michael nods, but --

MICHAEL

He won't stay.

BEN

Probably not. But before he goes, maybe we can help him, just a little.

As Michael pulls Ben to him:

CUT TO:

Justin's brought over a stack of the new posters he's made. He holds one up: one half is Stockwell's smiling face. The other half, the police photo of Jason Kemp lying dead in the dumpster. The title across the bottom of the poster reads "Dump Stockwell."

BRIAN

That's a real beauty.

JUSTIN

I'm kind of proud of it, myself.

BRIAN

So where should we stick it?

JUSTIN

City Hall, Police Headquarters, up his ass. We'll annihilate the fucker.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Don't be so sure. After all, it's only a poster.

JUSTIN

Only? The last one sent him around the bend. There was even an editorial in the paper. Think of the stink when they see this one.

Brian takes the poster out of Justin's hands, tacks it up -- then puts his arms around him.

BRIAN

How'd you get to be such a clever devil?

JUSTIN

I learned from the master.

As Brian pulls Justin into a long, hot passionate kiss:

CUT TO:

17 INT. VANGARD - VANCE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

17

Gardner Vance admits Stockwell into his office. Stockwell's face is grim.

STOCKWELL

Thanks for meeting me at this hour.

VANCE

You said you needed to speak to me, personally and confidentially.

STOCKWELL

That's right.

Vance offers him some scotch.

VANCE

Would you like some --

STOCKWELL

I don't drink.

VANCE

(nervously)

Thank God I do.

He pours himself one. Stockwell doesn't waste any time getting down to business.

(CONTINUED)

STOCKWELL

I've become aware of a situation within my campaign. That there's someone I've worked with closely, someone I've trusted, who's working against me.

VANCE

That's very unfortunate. But why are you telling me --?

STOCKWELL

It's Kinney.

A beat. Vance is taken aback. Way back.

VANCE

Brian? That's ludicrous. Brian would never --

STOCKWELL

I'm a cop. I know when I'm being set up. He sent me into that fiasco at the Gay and Lesbian Center, knowing exactly what would happen.

VANCE

How can you be sure?

STOCKWELL

That kid you've got working here --  
(finally remembering a name)  
Justin Taylor.

VANCE

(trying to place him)  
Taylor --?  
(finally recalling)  
He's a student intern in the Art Department.

Another CLICK for Stockwell.

VANCE (CONT'D)

I doubt Brian even knows who he is.

STOCKWELL

I saw them here, together. And they were there tonight.

VANCE

That still doesn't explain why Brian would do such a thing.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

STOCKWELL  
Because he's a fag.

CUT TO:

18 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

18

Brian and Justin are pulling each other's clothes off. Brian yanks Justin's pants down, goes down on his knees to suck Justin's cock.

CUT TO:

19 INT. VANGARD - VANCE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

19

VANCE  
He's got too much invested in your winning. This entire agency does. Why would he sabotage it?

STOCKWELL  
All I know is, I want him off my campaign -- before he causes any more damage.

Vance pours himself another.

VANCE  
That might prove to be a bit tricky. You've openly referred to him as the gay member of your team -- and as a "close friend and personal advisor".

STOCKWELL  
One guess whose goddamn idea it was to do that!

VANCE  
I suggest we sleep on it -- talk to him in the morning.

STOCKWELL  
I suggest we talk to him now.

CUT TO:

20 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

20

Brian is working Justin to a flying finish. "Dump Stockwell" posters are also flying -- off the desk/counter/table -- wherever they're doing it. Their rapid pounding is interrupted by some rapid pounding at the loft door.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Christ --! Never a moment's rest.

He pulls out, barely covers himself with whatever's handy -- a Stockwell poster, say -- irritatedly pulls open the door to REVEAL:

STOCKWELL AND VANCE

Taking it all in: Brian, the poster, Justin b.a. in the b.g.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

What's the matter? Haven't you ever seen two guys fucking before?

Stockwell's gaze moves from Brian to Justin to the poster. His shocked expression is replaced by a cold fury. He grabs it -- the poster, that is -- crumples it, quickly walks down the stairs. Vance hurries after him. Brian turns back to Justin:

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Want to finish?

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S APT - DAY

Ben and Michael are finishing breakfast. The conversation is tense, voices lowered.

MICHAEL

We can't stick around here all day keeping an eye on him --

BEN

Then we'll tell him he can come back tonight, after we get home, okay?

Michael sighs acquiescence as Hunter comes in from his room.

BEN (CONT'D)

(cheerfully)

Hey! How'd you sleep?

Hunter gives him a look, doesn't bother to answer.

HUNTER

Any coffee?

BEN

On the stove. Help yourself.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

So, are you off to school?

HUNTER

Yeah, got to make good grades if I want to get into Harvard.

MICHAEL

I take it that's a no.

BEN

You go to school, don't you?

HUNTER

Who the fuck are you, my social worker?

MICHAEL

Worse. He's a teacher.

Hunter shakes his head, sips his coffee.

BEN

You know, you ought to have a real breakfast. Let me fix you a protein shake.

MICHAEL

He's also a health freak.

HUNTER

I can tell already -- this isn't my day.

MICHAEL

Listen, Ben and I are going to work. So you've got to leave.

Ben adds quickly:

BEN

But we'll be back around seven. So if you want to have dinner, spend the night, we'll be here.

HUNTER

Hopefully, I'll have a trick who's paying me to sleep there.

MICHAEL

If you don't, make sure you show up before midnight. That's when we lock the door.

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER

(laughs)

A curfew? You're as bad as some of my foster parents.

MICHAEL

(a glance to Ben)

Maybe they weren't so bad after all.

Hunter grabs his knapsack, the coat Ben gave him, heads out. A beat, then Michael goes after him.

CUT TO:

22 INT. MICHAEL'S APT. - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

22

MICHAEL

Hey --!

(Hunter stops, turns back)

Before you go on your merry way, I need to ask you something. Not for myself -- for Ben.

HUNTER

I told you I'd do you both -- alone, together. Hell, I'll even do you for half price, just to show my appreciation.

MICHAEL

That's not what I was going to ask.

(then)

I want to know if you're coming back. I don't think you are. But Ben thinks otherwise. Guess you could say he has more faith in humanity -- or at least in you -- than I do. Anyway, I'd hate to see him get hurt. So if you don't plan on returning, just say so now, and I'll tell him not to expect you.

HUNTER

Look, all I asked was for him to say he was my uncle. I never asked for the free meal, the bed, the coat -- and I sure as hell didn't ask to hear I'm positive! So he can keep his fucking help!

Michael looks at him for a beat, his question answered.

MICHAEL

I'll let him know.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

As Michael goes back into the apartment, closes the door:

CUT TO:

23 INT. VANGARD ADVERTISING - VANCE'S OFFICE - DAY

23

Vance is confronting Brian.

VANCE

You've put me in a very difficult position, I hope you realize that.

BRIAN

(a slight ache in his back)  
Almost as difficult as the one you found me in.

VANCE

Even if you are a partner in this agency, I'm still the CEO and major shareholder -- and there are limits to what you can get away with.

BRIAN

Stockwell's got no business bringing you into this. If he has a problem, he can confront me directly.

VANCE

After what we saw last night? To say you were caught with your pants down is an understatement.

BRIAN

So you found me fucking the intern.

VANCE

(in one angry breath)  
The same intern who made those libelous, infantile posters, who Stockwell recognized from the fiasco at the Gay and Lesbian Center -- where he suspects you sent him knowing full well what would happen!

Brian faces his judge, jury and executioner with dignity.

BRIAN

All right, Gardner, get it over with. Do what you have to do.

But before he does:

(CONTINUED)

VANCE

First I want to know why you would do such a thing. Sacrifice your future, as well as this agency's -- for what?

A beat.

BRIAN

You wouldn't understand.

VANCE

Why not?

BRIAN

Because you're straight.

Gardner sighs, walks to the door, turns back.

VANCE

Whatever the reason -- you just fucked yourself out of a job.

As he leaves Brian standing there:

CUT TO:

Emmett sits alone in a booth, talking to Michael on his cell phone. He's frantic.

EMMETT

He said he was going to Woody's to have a drink with you and Ben.

(beat)

He didn't? Well, he hasn't come home, he hasn't called -- he could be lying dead somewhere! Oh, Michael -- I don't know what to do! I can't call the police, not after what -- look who it is!

Standing there are Melanie and Lindsay with Gus. Emmett immediately goes into performance mode.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

It's Mel and Linz! With Gus! Hi, sweetie!

(to the girls)

It's Michael.

(back to Michael)

Well, you have a nice day, too. Me?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm just going to stay at home,  
kick back, watch the tribute to  
Hitchcock on AMC. Did you ever see  
"The Lady Vanishes"? Talk to you  
later!

(clicking off)

What a surprise!

MELANIE

It's not like it's Botswana and we ran  
into each other at the oasis.

LINDSAY

Mind if we --?

They slide in, forcing him to force a gracious yet manic  
smile. (You can do anything, Peter).

EMMETT

Want something to drink?  
Coffeetealemonade? Are you hungry?  
How about a grilled cheese? My treat!

LINDSAY

For someone who's kicking back, you're  
going a mile a minute.

EMMETT

(laughing it off, ha-ha)  
You know me! My Aunt Lulah used to say  
they'd've named me Speedy Alka-Seltzer  
if there hadn't already been one.

LINDSAY

So where's Teddy?

EMMETT

He's -- out. Taking a walk. To the  
gym. He's walking to the gym. He's on  
a new regimen --

MELANIE

I was going to call him later, see how  
he's doing --

EMMETT

Sooo much better, thanks --

MELANIE

-- because I was checking out Gus's  
college fund --

EMMETT

I know he's been busy looking for just  
the right investment.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

He must've found it, 'cause all the money in Gus's savings account's been withdrawn.

A beat. Emmett tries to absorb this.

EMMETT

With -- drawn?

LINDSAY

(to Emmett)

You know how Melanie watches money --

MELANIE

Is that an anti-semitic remark?

LINDSAY

Yes, that's exactly what it is.

(moving right along)

Like a hawk.

MELANIE

You remember that time --

LINDSAY

The bank deducted sixty dollars by mistake? How could I ever forget?

EMMETT

He must've bought some high-yielding bond, or stock that's about to split three hundred for one -- you know what a wiz Teddy is!

LINDSAY

See? I told you. She's such a control freak.

EMMETT

But just to put your mind at ease -- and mine -- I'll have him call you, soon as he gets back. From his walk. To the gym. From his walk to the gym!

CUT TO:

Brian sits on the sofa, rolling a joint. Moody music plays. The doorbell rings. He moves to the door, sliding it open to  
FIND:

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

Debbie who pushes past him into the loft, bearing a casserole.

DEBBIE

Tuna and macaroni. It was your favorite when you were a kid.

BRIAN

No it wasn't.

DEBBIE

Don't argue with me, you fucking loved it!

She slams it down on the counter, then:

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

I heard you lost your job.

BRIAN

I was escorted out of my office by a security guard, without so much as a ball point pen.

DEBBIE

(she slaps him on the back with a mighty laugh)

That I'd like to have seen!

BRIAN

So you could tell me I had it coming?

DEBBIE

Damn right you did. What you and Sunshine were up to was treacherous, deceitful --

(beat)

And I've never been so fuckin' proud of you in my life!

BRIAN

Thanks, Ma.

He returns to rolling his joint. Debbie watches him.

DEBBIE

Can you still buy a lid?

BRIAN

Only if you've got a time machine.

DEBBIE

I haven't smoked since James Taylor had hair.

(CONTINUED)

Brian puts the finishing touches on the joint, holds it out to her.

BRIAN

Recall the thrilling days of yesteryear.

DEBBIE

I gotta go home, do the laundry.

Brian shrugs, lights the joint, takes a huge toke. Debbie sniffs the wafting smoke, longingly.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

One whiff of that and I'm back at Woodstock -- getting laid by three guys named Julio.

She debates a moment, then joins him on the sofa.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

Tell anyone and you're a fuckin' dead man.

BRIAN

Your secret's safe with me, senorita.

Debbie takes a toke, coughs madly, hands it back to Brian.

DEBBIE

Shit's strong.

BRIAN

Fifty bucks for an eighth of hydro, it better be.

DEBBIE

I won't even pretend to understand what that meant.

As they pass the joint back and forth:

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

You know, you really scared me Brian. I thought this time you'd finally done it.

He looks at her, "Done what?" She continues.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

Sold your soul for money, power. I know how much those things mean to you. And I understand where it comes from.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

But each time you reach the precipice and are about to step head-long into oblivion, you always manage to pull back. Why is that?

BRIAN

Winter sale at Prada?

DEBBIE

I believe it's your innate goodness.

BRIAN

Oh, shit --!

DEBBIE

Don't laugh when I'm being profound! It's what one of those philosophers -- Socrates, Plato -- wrote about us being born with a sense of right and wrong: we all know. And you're no different. Fucking thing went out.

BRIAN

Just as well. Any more, you'll be taking off your bra and singing "White Rabbit".

DEBBIE

Oh God, I loved the Airplane! I lived for Grace Slick! Now we've got Britney Spears. Tell me the world hasn't gone to shit.

BRIAN

The world's gone to shit.

DEBBIE

I coulda told you that.

(then)

So drop the Bad Boy routine. You're too old for it, and it's not true.

BRIAN

Anything else?

DEBBIE

Yeah.

(getting the munchies)

You got a bag of chips?

CUT TO:

26 INT. MICHAEL'S APT - NIGHT

26

Ben and Michael sit silently at the table, having dinner. Ben glances at the clock -- or his watch. Sees Michael looking at him.

BEN

I know. He's not coming back.

MICHAEL

Are you really surprised?

Ben takes a beat, finally:

BEN

Yeah, I guess I am. I felt there were moments -- a flicker in his eye, a pause before he'd answer -- when I thought something registered. That I was actually getting through to him.  
(taking a bite)  
Call me crazy.

MICHAEL

You're not crazy.  
(beat)  
Just kind.

BEN

Well let's hope he's being careful.  
That he at least heard that much.

MICHAEL

We can always hope.

As Ben and Michael resume eating in silence:

CUT TO:

27 EXT. STREET - NIGHT

27

Brian and Justin exit Brian's loft, walk to his parked car.

JUSTIN

There's always unemployment. And I suppose you could write your memoirs -- there seems to be an endless fascination among the masses to revel in the downfall of the once-mighty.

BRIAN

Thanks for the career tips, but I think I'll just go to Babylon and fuck my brains out.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

Think again. Backroom's closed.

BRIAN

Well the hell if we're going to stand bare-ass in the back of an 18-wheeler when it's 12 degrees!

JUSTIN

I could always make my mother's meat loaf, honey. Then we can look at the photos from when we took the kids to Disney World.

Brian swats him.

BRIAN

I have a better idea.

CUT TO:

28 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

28

Michael and Emmett's heads practically revolve like police lights. But they're not looking to score.

EMMETT

All I can say is, he'd better be here!

MICHAEL

You don't really think he ran off with Gus's college fund? That's not Ted!

EMMETT

That's what I've been trying to tell you -- I'm not sure I know who Ted is any more.

Just then, Emmett sees Derek -- drugged, dancing by himself on the dance floor.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

See him --?

MICHAEL

The loser?

EMMETT

He's one of the guys we ran into -- one of Ted's "new" friends. Come on --

They go over to Derek, eyes closed, groovin' to the music. Emmett tries to break through.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT (CONT'D)

Excuse me --? I said, excuse me!

Derek opens his eyes -- blinks at them.

EMMETT (CONT'D)

My name's Emmett. You probably don't remember --

(off Derek's glazed look)

No, I'm sure you don't. But try. My boyfriend, Ted Schmidt, and I ran into you and your friends the other day. Anyway, I'm looking for him. You see, he didn't come home last night. He didn't even call, and I'm worried that he might be --

DEREK

He went to Palm Springs.

A beat. Now it's Emmett's turn to have the glazed look.

EMMETT

What?

DEREK

We were tweaking last night --

EMMETT

Tweaking --?

MICHAEL

Ted --?

DEREK

-- and he and a couple of the others decided to go to the White Party. Wish I could afford to.

He dances on. A beat.

EMMETT

Since when can Ted?

MICHAEL

That guy's a strung out crystal queen -- he doesn't know what he's saying. Come on, let's keep looking.

EMMETT

(after a beat, decisively)

No. Let's go home.

CUT TO:

29 INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 29

Ben sits in bed, marking papers. Michael lies by his side, already asleep. He glances at the clock. It's a minute to midnight. He puts aside his work, reaches to turn out the light on the bedstand. Just then, there's a knock at the door. Michael's eyes open.

BEN

I'll get it.

He gets out of bed, goes into:

30 INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 30

Ben makes his way to the front door. Opens it. Hunter is standing there.

BEN

Eleven Fifty-Nine and thirty seconds.

HUNTER

You said midnight.

That he did. As Hunter breezes past him, to his room:

CUT TO:

31 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT 31

The dance floor is rocking.

Suddenly, there's a stir. People stop dancing, turning to face the entrance.

THERE'S BRIAN

Carrying a crowbar. Justin stands just a little behind him. As if the crowd had a collective conscious, one by one they stop dancing, anticipating what's about to happen. Brian raises the crowbar over his head in a swift, defiant warrior like gesture.

The crowd realizes what Brian's about to do and parts like the Red Sea, giving him a clear path. A number of bouncers try to get through the crowd, but find their way purposely blocked. Brian, followed by Justin, moves down the path as everyone starts clapping rhythmically. He arrives at his destination:

THE PADLOCKED DOOR TO THE BACKROOM.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

The clapping stops. He raises the padlock and with one-two-three well-aimed blows, smashes the lock. Then he throws open the door, turns to the crowd:

BRIAN

Backroom's reopened, boys!

The crowd goes fucking beserk. Screaming, cheering, jumping! Justin grabs Brian's hand, leads him into:

32 INT. BABYLON - BACKROOM - NIGHT

32

A stream of men follows them until it seems most of the club has disappeared inside. They begin to pull at one another's clothes, to kiss, to grope: a spontaneous orgy! At the center of the orgy are Brian and Justin, shirts off, laughing, kissing, pressed together in defiance -- and joy.

FADE OUT.

THE END