

# queer asfolk

EPISODE 401

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Executive Producers

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Cast List, Pages 20 & 25

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PRODUCTIONS

**TONY JONAS**  
PRODUCTIONS

**TEMPLE STREET**  
PRODUCTIONS

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EPISODE 401

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  
 VIC GRASSI.....Jack Wetherall  
 JENNIFER TAYLOR.....Sherry Miller  
 GARDNER VANCE.....Carlo Rota  
 HUNTER.....Harris Allan  
 BLAKE WYZECKI.....Dean Armstrong

and as

DEBBIE NOVOTNY.....Sharon Gless

GUEST CAST

SHANDA LEER	CLIENT #2
TODD	CLIENT #3
RITA MONTGOMERY	HOT HUNK
CASHIER	LANDREY
CLIENT #1	JUDGE
*RODNEY	*GUS

Then holding up five credit card statements.

FADE IN:

1 INT. LIMBO

1

A sultry faux-female songstress, SHANDA LEER, is performing in a sexy pink SPOT. She is our Greek Chorus, commenting on the action in lyric and song, as she lip-synchs classic tunes.

SHANDA LEER

"Kiss today goodbye, and point me  
toward tomorrow, I did what I had to  
do, Can't forget, Don't regret, What I  
did for --"

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (O.S.)

-- shit!

CUT TO:

2 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - NIGHT

2

The loft is almost empty, as we last saw it. FIND BRIAN at his desk, sorting through the mail, tossing unsolicited solicitations over his shoulder.

BRIAN

(grousing)  
It's that time of the month again.

JUSTIN

When your "Little Friend" comes to  
visit?

BRIAN

When every gay charity on the fucking  
planet tries to hit me up for a table  
at their benefit, an ad in their  
booklet, a sperm sample for their  
silent auction --

Then holding up five credit card statements:

BRIAN (cont'd)

Unfortunately, it's also that time of  
the month for my credit card bills.

JUSTIN takes them, reviews them with dismay.

JUSTIN

I've never seen so many zeroes.

(CONTINUED)

2

CONTINUED: Then why won't you let me --

2

BRIAN

Because I don't need your help. I

don't need anybody's help.

BRIAN

Except for a mixer at the Gay and Lesbian Center.

He goes to pour himself a drink. The goddamn bottle is empty.

JUSTIN

How're you going to pay for 'em all?

BRIAN

How many blow jobs can you give in an hour?

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

Not enough. Not nearly enough.

BRIAN

Guess I'll have to come up with the cash some other way.

JUSTIN

Look, we sold almost three-thousand copies of Rage on the net last month alone. I could give you some--

\*

BRIAN

No.

JUSTIN

Why not?

BRIAN

I'm not taking your money.

JUSTIN

I thought we were partners.

Beat.

BRIAN

We are.

JUSTIN

Then why won't you let me --

BRIAN

Because I don't need your help. I don't need anybody's help.

He goes to pour himself a drink. The goddamn bottle is empty.

(CONTINUED)

Avenue would be a Police State if it weren't for you.

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3.

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

INT. BABYLON - BACKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Justin close on his heels. BRIAN (cont'd)

What I need is a --

JUSTIN

And now, when you need help --

CUT TO:

3 INT. BABYLON - NIGHT  
Justin, getting fucked.

3

Brian and Justin at the bar.

BRIAN

(to the BARTENDER)

-- Chivas Regal.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

You may be a pauper, but you drink like a prince.

(to the Bartender)

Make it two.

(reaching for his wallet)

On me.

BRIAN

(stopping him)

Keep it, Big Spender. I can still afford to tie one on without any assistance from you.

JUSTIN

Christ, you won't even let me buy you a drink!

The bartender serves them. Brian tosses down some bills, tosses back his drink, then heads across the floor. Justin downs his drink, follows.

JUSTIN (cont'd)

I don't know what the fuck your problem is! You help everyone -- Liberty Avenue would be a Police State if it weren't for you.

\*

Brian enters:

4 INT. BABYLON - BACKROOM - CONTINUOUS

4

Justin close on his heels.

JUSTIN

And now, when you need help --

They pass TODD, getting fucked.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

JUSTIN (cont'd)  
Hey, Todd, how's it going?

TODD  
Fine.

JUSTIN  
(back to Brian)  
Where was I?

BRIAN  
"When I need help" --

JUSTIN  
Right. You won't take it! You know  
why that is?

BRIAN  
Pourquoi?

JUSTIN  
Because you always have to be the one  
in charge. The one who's in control!  
The one who's on top!

Brian looks at him for a beat, smiles, then spins Justin  
around, yanks down his pants:

BRIAN  
You got it.

CUT TO:

5

EXT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

5

BEN, who's just come out of the front door with his bike and  
his briefcase, is trying to ignore RITA MONTGOMERY, Hunter's  
mother, who harangues and harasses him.

RITA  
Where is he this time -- the movies?  
Little League?

BEN  
Look, I told you --

RITA  
I know -- "You don't have a clue."  
Like I believe that!

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

5

INT. MELANIE AND LINDSAY'S HOUSE - DAY

MELANIE's going through a stack of mail. So's LINDSAY.  
Nearby is a sickly orchid plant.

BEN

I don't care what you believe.

(beat)

He took off. It's not exactly the first time he's run away, is it? So I'd say it's safe to assume he's back on the streets.

RITA

And what about your boyfriend? He doesn't seem to be around either.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

He's gone to find him.

(firmly, and finally)

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have a class --

He starts to move on. She stops him.

RITA

And I have a custody hearing on Tuesday. If Jimmy's not there, I'm going to have the cops all over your little boyfriend's ass -- you hear me -- ? 'Cause keeping a kid away from his mother -- that's called contributing to the delinquency of a minor. And if he took him, that's kidnapping. I could have him arrested.

\*

BEN

You wouldn't do that.

RITA

(with a smile)

You're a smart guy, "Professor". You figure out how many years your sweetie could be locked up for.

\*

\*

CUT TO:

6

INT. MELANIE AND LINDSAY'S HOUSE - DAY

6

MELANIE's going through a stack of mail. So's LINDSAY.  
Nearby is a sickly orchid plant.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

EMMETT  
If we don't look after each other, who will?

MELANIE  
Suddenly, Emmett (reading off the letters)  
Angels Over Pittsburgh -- Teen Suicide Prevention Hotline -- Transgender Shelter -- The Marriage Initiative -- Jesus! We must get invited to ten of these fund-raisers a day.

LINDSAY  
Look -- Ted gets them, too.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE  
Must be on the same Victim's List.

LINDSAY  
I'm happy to contribute to a worthy cause as much as the next guy -- uh, gal -- but can't they hit up somebody else for a change?

MELANIE  
If we give any more, someone's going to have to throw us a benefit!

Just then, EMMETT flies in the door.

EMMETT  
Hi, girls! I'd love to shmooze -- but I have to slip into a bubble bath, get dressed and be out the door in five!

LINDSAY  
Hot date?

EMMETT  
From your lips to the gay god's ears. Vic and I are doing an event tonight for Think Positive. \*

MELANIE  
Another benefit? Does it ever end?

EMMETT  
If we don't look after each other, who will?

Suddenly, Emmett notices the plant.

EMMETT (cont'd)  
Funny, Ted had an orchid that looked just like that -- poor thing was hanging on by a tendril.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EMMETT

I'm reeeeeeally busy --  
EMMETT (cont'd)

Used to call it "Droopy". Short for  
"Droopus Orchidus".

MELANIE

Say hello to "Droopy".  
I'm reeeeeeally busy --

EMMETT

What're you doing with it? Lesbians  
are notorious for having black thumbs.

MELANIE

He called us. Asked us to take in his  
mail --

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

-- and take care of his plants.

EMMETT

(testy)

Is he off to the Black and Blue party  
in Sardinia?

MELANIE

He's in rehab.

A beat. Emmett stops.

LINDSAY

He checked himself in. Voluntarily.  
We thought we'd go visit him.

MELANIE

How about coming with us?

EMMETT

Can't.

(reminding them)

The benefit?

MELANIE

Doesn't have to be tonight.

EMMETT

I'm reeeeeeally busy --

MELANIE

I'm sure he could use the support.

EMMETT

What an interesting thing to hear  
coming from you, Mel. You were  
practically the first to condemn him.  
Now you're his cheerleader?

\*

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: (3)

6

MELANIE

He's trying to help himself.

LINDSAY

Isn't that what you wanted?

CUT TO:

START ON A TV

A POLICE SCENE from an old movie, an old series, doesn't matter -- "I don't care where they are! FIND THEM!" snaps the Chief. ZAP! We're onto cartoons. ZAP! The weather report. ZAP! A commercial (for a car, a coia, a resort spot -- whatever -- featuring a couple on a sandy beach). PULL BACK to REVEAL we are in:

7 INT. MOTEL - ROOM 17 - DAY

7

A generic, no-frills, just-off-the-highway motel room. Rain is beating down outside the window. HUNTER is lying on one of two beds watching TV, surrounded by the debris of fast food and mini-marts: burger containers, pizza boxes, empty bags of chips and pretzels, candy wrappers, soda cans. The self-appointed King of the Airwaves, he ZAPS from one channel to the next as MICHAEL paces nervously.

MICHAEL

Do you think you can keep something on for longer than a second?

HUNTER

What difference does it make? It's all shit.

MICHAEL

Where're the barbecue chips?

HUNTER

(finishing up the last one)  
Too late.

MICHAEL

The Cap'n Crunch?

HUNTER

(tossing him the empty box)  
That ship's sailed.

Michael reaches for a bag of cookies. Empty.

MICHAEL

Hey! I had a whole bag of --

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

HUNTER

Dude! Whassup?

7

INTERCUT WITH:

HUNTER

EXT. STREET

Gone.

(then)

So how much longer do we have to stay here?

MICHAEL

Have you seen what it's doing outside? It's practically a monsoon!

HUNTER

When it lets up, I say we head off to Mexico! Grow moustaches and become drug lords! What do you say?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

(looking at Hunter for a beat, then)

Why do I bother?

HUNTER

I don't hear you coming up with some brilliant plan!

MICHAEL

I'd better -- and soon. We're running out of cash -- fast.

HUNTER

You have a credit card.

MICHAEL

If I use it, they can track us.

Just then, Michael's cell phone BEEPS! He checks it.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

It's Ben.

Hunter leaps over to Michael's bed, grabs it.

HUNTER

Dude! Whassup?

INTERCUT WITH:

8 EXT. STREET - DAY

8

\*

BEN

Hunter? Hey, Pal! How's it goin'?

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER

We're stuck in a shithole motel in the pouring rain, down to our last Cheeto. But other than that, life is beautiful.

MICHAEL

(taking the phone back)

Would you give me that? Ben?

BEN

Michael, are you okay?

MICHAEL

I'm fine.

(zapping off the TV)

We're both fine.

BEN

Listen, Hunter's mom came by again.

MICHAEL

What'd you tell her?

BEN

That he ran away and you went looking for him. But she didn't believe me. Now she's threatening to have you arrested.

MICHAEL

For what?

BEN

Kidnapping, contributing to the delinquency of a minor --

MICHAEL

Can she do that?

BEN

All I know is, she can make a lot of trouble -- for all of us. That's why you have to come back.

MICHAEL

I told you, I'm not going to let her take him.

BEN

Well, you can't just hide out forever!

MICHAEL

We'll be okay.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

8

BEN  
Michael, please. Tell me where you are.

MICHAEL  
I don't want you to get into trouble -- or to have to lie.

BEN  
Dammit, Michael --! Michael --?

(CONTINUED)

But Michael disconnects, stands there, worried, motionless. Hunter throws on his jacket, heads toward the door.

MICHAEL  
Where're you going?

HUNTER  
To get us something to eat -- before we starve to death.

As he heads out into the downpour:

CUT TO:

9 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

9

Brian, Lindsay, Melanie and Ben are in a booth. Justin busses nearby. DEBBIE, in a tizzy, is handing out lunch platters, getting them all maxed up.

DEBBIE  
Three days! Three fucking days and not a fucking word --!

LINDSAY  
Uh -- Debbie, I got the tuna melt?

BEN  
And I got the turkey wrap?

DEBBIE  
(switching plates)  
Sorry -- except for this strange, cryptic message: "Don't worry, Ma, I'm all right"

JUSTIN  
Doesn't sound so strange or cryptic to me.

DEBBIE  
You're not a mother.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN  
Hey -- where's mine?

BEN  
(reassuring)  
I just spoke with him, Debbie. He's all right.

DEBBIE  
He's not all right. A mother can always read between the lines.  
(worried, she helps herself to one of Brian's french fries)  
This is the first time since Michael knew how to pick up a phone that we haven't talked three times a day.

JUSTIN  
Three?

BRIAN  
I know. It explains so much.

DEBBIE  
Ben, honey, next time you talk to him will you please tell him I love him up to the sky and back?

BEN  
Sure, Deb --

DEBBIE  
And that if he's not back here, pronto, I'm going to rip his balls off!

MELANIE  
(to Ben)  
Why don't you let me make a few calls, find out about this custody hearing, see if there's anything I can do.

BEN  
That'd be great if you could, Mel.

Debbie hands Ben and Mel and Linz their checks.

BRIAN  
Hey -- where's mine?

DEBBIE  
Don't worry about it, honey. You can settle it later -- once you're back on your feet.

Brian stands to his full height, proud and tall.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

BRIAN

9A

There.

(snatching the checks out of  
Ben and Mel's hands)  
And lunch is on me.

JUSTIN

Brian -- !

BRIAN

What --? I'm not allowed to treat my  
friends?

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

It's okay, Bri --

MELANIE

We can handle it --

BEN

Soon as you get another job --

BRIAN

(refusing to hear)  
By four-thirty this afternoon, I intend  
to be once more employed in my former  
position, and with a sizable raise.

JUSTIN

Vance asked you back?

LINDSAY

Brian, that's great!

As the others all chime in: "Congrats, way to go!"

BRIAN

Of course, I'll be as gracious as I  
possibly can -- and then stick it to  
the motherfucker.

(handing Debbie a bill)

Keep the change, Deb.

CUT TO:

\*

9A INT. LIMBO

9A

\*

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen -- Miss Shanda  
Leer!

\*

\*

\*

(CONTINUED)

9A CONTINUED:

9A

SHANDA LEER

"There'll be a change in the weather  
and a change in the sea. From now on  
there'll be a change in me --"

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

CUT TO:

10 CLOSE ON TED

10

TED

(with difficulty)

I -- uh -- crashed. I think I was out  
for a day or so. When I finally came  
to, the party was still going on.  
Well, the party was always going on --

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

As Ted and Blake make their way out of the therapy room down the hall.

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14.

10

CONTINUED:

BLAKE

10

I know how hard that was for you -- but just remember, nobody was judging you. We've all been there, in our own way.

There are a few AUDIBLE MURMURS of recognition. PULL BACK TO REVEAL we are in:

TED

Your being there made it a lot easier.

INT. REHAB - GROUP THERAPY - DAY

BLAKE

TED is addressing a group of six or seven fellow rehab PATIENTS.

TED (CONT'D)

The guys were downstairs watching porn. The ones that weren't too tweaked out of their minds, that is. They were really into it. It looked hot. I drew a little off Dr. C's pipe and then I saw the guy in the video, the one getting gang-banged.

(CONTINUED)

\*

He hesitates. This is really tough. BLAKE gives him a look. It's all right. He doesn't have to go on if he doesn't want to. But Ted bravely continues.

TED (cont'd)

It was me.

(a beat)

That's how out of control I was. God knows if they were even using condoms. I'll have to get a test. I don't feel very optimistic. Anyway that's when I knew -- that if I didn't come here -- I could be dead.

\*

He takes a deep breath. There. It's out. He turns to BLAKE, who offers a comforting smile.

CUT TO:

11 INT. REHAB - HALLWAY - DAY

11

As Ted and Blake make their way out of the therapy room down the hall.

BLAKE

I know how hard that was for you -- but just remember, nobody was judging you. We've all been there, in our own way.

TED

Your being there made it a lot easier.

BLAKE

I'm glad.

(CONTINUED)

11

CONTINUED: ~~Keep our mouths shut~~

11

~~I'm happy -- if that's the word -- that~~

TED

In fact, I keep thinking, if this hadn't happened -- if I hadn't come stumbling through that door -- we might never have seen each other again.

(an awkward beat, then)

So, you want to grab some lunch?

BLAKE

Let me just check my messages and I'll meet you in the lounge.

Blake goes off. FOLLOW TED as he makes his way to:

12

INT. REHAB - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

12

He suddenly stops, SEES through the glass: Emmett waiting there. Emmett doesn't see Ted, who panics a little -- should he go in or disappear? A beat, then he pulls himself together, goes in. PATIENTS are eating their lunch off trays. Ted breezes in with bravado:

TED

Well, this is a surprise! I thought they outlawed shock therapy!

EMMETT

Hello, Teddy.

TED

So how'd you find me? Don't tell me I made the papers again!

Emmett forces a smile to match Ted's forced humor.

EMMETT

Mel and Linz told me you checked yourself in.

TED

And I thought only us faggots couldn't keep our mouths shut.

EMMETT

I'm happy -- if that's the word -- that you're here.

TED

Nothing like a little R&R in a cozy little B&B.

EMMETT

So -- uh -- how long're you going to --

(CONTINUED)

TED  
Not long. I'm already feeling good as new. They say I'm making remarkable progress.

EMMETT  
Just then, Blake enters with a lunch tray.  
I'm glad to hear it. But just be careful. You don't want to rush it or --

A beat. He stops himself.

(CONTINUED)

TED  
Or -- what?

EMMETT  
Nothing.

TED  
Or I'll wind up using again? Is that what you were going to say?

EMMETT  
All I meant was -- be careful not to take the cupcakes out of the oven until they're done.

TED  
Well, isn't that profound. In case you haven't noticed, I'm not a cupcake. And I have no intention of ending up back here in the Losers' Lounge -- because I'm not a loser!

EMMETT  
Look, I didn't come here to upset you --

TED  
Then why did you? To see for yourself how far I've sunk?

EMMETT  
No!

TED  
I told Mel and Linz I didn't want anyone visiting --

EMMETT  
Since when am I "anyone"?

Just then, Blake enters with a lunch tray.

(CONTINUED)

SHANDA LEER

"Now you say you're sorry, for being so

untrue. Well you can Cry Me A River,

Cry Me A River, I Cried A River over--"

BLAKE  
(to Ted)

Hey, Ted, you'd better grab some lunch

before it's all --

You look great.

He comes face-to-face with Emmett. A beat.

TED

Blake, you remember --

BLAKE

Emmett, of course. Good to see you.

EMMETT

Back again -- or haven't you ever left?

TED

Blake isn't a patient. He's a

substance abuse counselor. And a damn

good one.

A beat, as Emmett sizes up the situation.

EMMETT

Well, if anyone knows his stuff, it's

you.

TED

He's been -- amazing. I don't know

what I'd have done if --

EMMETT

(interrupting Ted's tribute)

Listen, I just came by to see if you're

all right -- and it seems like are. So

--

CUT TO:

Shanda Leer is lip-synching "Cry Me A River".

SHANDA LEER

"Now you say you're sorry, for being so

untrue. Well you can Cry Me A River,

Cry Me A River, I Cried A River over--"

VANCE (O.S.)

You look great!

CUT TO:

14 INT. VANGARD AGENCY - VANCE'S OFFICE - DAY 14

Brian, cool and confident, is dressed in his sharpest business attire. GARDNER VANCE, welcoming and warm, pours him a drink.

VANCE  
Whiskey?

BRIAN  
Little early for Happy Hour --

VANCE  
You're here. I'm happy!  
(handing Brian his drink)  
So'd you hear the news? Stockwell's  
being indicted in the cover-up of that  
young man's murder. Mayor Deekins has  
demanded his resignation.

BRIAN  
My, how the mighty have fallen.

VANCE  
Damn lucky for Vanguard he didn't take  
us down with him.  
(then)  
So name your price.

BRIAN  
For what?

VANCE  
To come back, of course. We need you  
here. I need you here.

BRIAN  
I don't know, Gardner. It's not just a  
matter of money. There're other  
issues, such as a jacuzzi in my private  
bathroom, an unlimited expense account -  
- loyalty.

VANCE  
I give you my word -- and my handshake.  
(they shake)  
Now, I'll just need you to sign this.

He passes Brian a form. Brian regards it for a beat.

BRIAN  
A non-competition clause?

(CONTINUED)

14

CONTINUED: Haven't seen him. Sorry.

14

Michael nods, grateful but frustrated.

15

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS  
VANCE  
Just a formality --

16

\*

Where all the big rigs are parked. The rain has finally let  
Brian smiles ruefully.

BRIAN

So that's why you wanted me back.  
Afraid I might raid the pantry. And  
here I thought it was me you didn't  
want to lose.

(CONTINUED)

VANCE

You're not giving yourself enough  
credit.

BRIAN

I'm giving myself all the credit. I'm  
the one who brought in our major  
accounts, who created their campaigns,  
who convinced the world it couldn't  
live without their products. They'd go  
with me faster than a ten-second spot.  
But once I sign this, they'd all be off-  
limits.

\*  
\*

(tossing the agreement on  
Vance's desk)

Well don't count your clients before  
they're snatched.

CUT TO:

15

INT. TRUCK STOP - NIGHT

15

Michael stands before the CASHIER, trying to explain:

MICHAEL

He's sixteen, tall, skinny, long dark  
blond hair, can have a bit of an  
attitude --

CASHIER

Haven't seen him. Sorry.

Michael nods, grateful but frustrated.

16

EXT. TRUCK STOP - CONTINUOUS

16

Where all the big rigs are parked. The rain has finally let  
up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHAEL

Okay. That's it. Let's go.

Michael turns away from the truck stop on his way back to the motel when he sees Hunter climbing down out of the cab of one of the rigs. As the truck roars away, Michael calls --

MICHAEL

Hunter!

Hunter spots him, gives him a broad grin, runs over.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Where the fuck have you been? I've been looking all over for you.

(CONTINUED)

\*  
\*

HUNTER

Come on, let's eat -- dinner's on me!

He pulls out a handful of bills.

MICHAEL

Where'd you get that?

Hunter gives him a classic "where-do-you-think-I-got-it" look. As the truth registers on Michael:

MICHAEL (cont'd)

How many truckers did you have to fuck to get it?

HUNTER

Just one. And it was only a blow job.

MICHAEL

That's a relief.

(furious)

How could you --?

HUNTER

How could I what? We're broke -- isn't that what you said?

Michael looks at Hunter for a beat. Makes a decision.

MICHAEL

Okay. That's it. Let's go.

HUNTER

To Mexico?

MICHAEL

To Pittsburgh.

HUNTER

No way! You promised!

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

MICHAEL  
Well, I'm breaking it. Come on --

HUNTER  
(throwing Michael's arm off him)  
Get the fuck off me!

MICHAEL  
Listen, you little asshole. I risked everything for you. Now you're going to do what I say. We're going to go back and fight. Then we're going to attempt to turn you into a normal human being -- although, at the moment, flapping my arms and flying to the moon seems like a better bet. Now, move it!

(CONTINUED)

As Michael and Hunter start walking back to the hotel:

CUT TO:

17 INT. REHAB - HALLWAY - NIGHT

17

Ted is down on his hands and knees with a bucket, sponge and mop, scrubbing the floor when a couple of RE-HABITANTS walk by, chatting, right where Ted just cleaned.

TED  
Hey! Can't you see I just cleaned there?

They turn around, surprised to be snapped at, keep walking. Blake goes over to Ted.

BLAKE  
Testy tonight?

TED  
They think I'm doing this for my health?

BLAKE  
Actually, you are.

Ted resigns himself to his fate, goes back to scrubbing.

TED  
I wonder if they made Elizabeth Taylor do this.

BLAKE  
Absolutely. In her diamonds.

(CONTINUED)

(beat)  
-- I more than cared about you.  
BLAKE:  
I know. That's why I had to leave.

TED  
Well maybe I'd feel better about it if  
I was wearing a 600-carat choker.

BLAKE  
I'll pick one up for you when I'm out.

A beat, then:

TED  
Sorry. I'm just feeling a little -- (CONTINUED)

BLAKE  
Upset?

TED  
Constipated, actually. I haven't had a  
bowel movement since I got here. So  
forget the choker and just bring me  
some Metamucil --

Blake looks into Ted's eyes, sees behind the joke. \*

BLAKE  
Look, I know what you're going through.  
It wasn't that long ago I was going  
through it myself.

TED  
I remember bringing you here. Then  
coming back to see you and --

BLAKE  
I was gone. It wasn't very nice of me.

TED  
It was fucking shitty. I cared about  
you. I --  
(beat)  
-- I more than cared about you.

BLAKE  
I know. That's why I had to leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: Um -- yeah, actually. We're going to see "Lucia".

The news of this catches Ted off-guard.

TED

(sarcastic)

To spare me the pain? I mean, you -- I don't -- that's -- that's --

BLAKE

And myself. From you seeing me like that. I'm hooked, thanks to you.

TED

Well now it's my turn. I'm the one down on my knees, scrubbing the floor. The one they come to gawk at, so they can feel superior.

(CONTINUED)

(beat)

Like Emmett.

BLAKE

I'm sure he felt as uncomfortable as you.

But Ted's too upset to hear.

TED

I guess it takes something like this for a person to reveal their true colors.

(beat)

Well, at least I've got you. You're the only one who knows how it feels, what it's like.

Blake rises.

BLAKE

I have to get going --

TED

(kidding)

Hot date?

BLAKE

Um -- yeah, actually. We're going to see "Lucia".

The news of this catches Ted off-guard.

TED

Oh. That's nice. I -- I didn't know -- I mean -- that you liked opera.

BLAKE

I'm hooked, thanks to you.

(CONTINUED)

I was a perfect angel.

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24.

17 CONTINUED: (3)

17

BEN

Thank God you're both safe and in one piece.

TED

Then WE HEAR: (a bit too jovial)

Well, at least that's one addiction you don't have to go to rehab for. Have fun--!

As Ted watches Blake go, feeling like the biggest loser in the Loser's Lounge:

CUT TO:

CUT TO:

18 SCENE OMITTED

18

19 EXT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

19

Michael and Ben stand wrapped in a romantic kiss in front of Brian's Corvette as Hunter watches.

BEN

I missed you so much --

MICHAEL

You, too --

HUNTER

Hey! What about me? \*

BEN

Come here pal -- did you behave yourself? \*

MICHAEL

He was a perfect angel.

Hunter glances over at Michael -- who gives him a clandestine "this'll-be-our-little-secret" look.

HUNTER

(to Ben)

I was a perfect angel.

Ben embraces him in a big bear hug.

BEN

Thank God you're both safe and in one piece.

Then WE HEAR:

BRIAN (V.O.)

At least it's still in one piece.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. BRIAN'S BUILDING - DAY 20

We find Brian, in one of his expensive suits, examining his car, rubbing away a smudge.

MICHAEL  
You'll be happy to know Hunter and I  
are both okay, too.

BRIAN  
(baby-talking to the car) (CONTINUED)  
Did he take good care of you? Did he  
use premium?

Michael rolls his eyes. Brian opens the car door, gasps as he FINDS a fast food container.

BRIAN (cont'd)  
What's this?

MICHAEL  
A burger box?

BRIAN  
You ate in my car?

MICHAEL  
We were in a hurry to get home -- we  
didn't want to stop --

BRIAN  
So you turn my car into a -- recycling  
bin? Christ, it's just like that time  
in seventh grade. I let you borrow my  
new ten speed and you bring it back  
with the fender crushed, the seat torn -  
-

MICHAEL  
I was hit by a bus!

BRIAN  
This is the last time I ever loan you--

Michael suddenly grabs him in a surprise kiss on the lips.  
Beat.

BRIAN (cont'd)  
What was that for?

(CONTINUED)

And now, for my next number --  
(lip-synching)

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26.

20

CONTINUED: care if it's cloudy or bright, 'cause I  
only have eyes for you, dear --

20

CUT TO:

MICHAEL

For giving me the wheels out from under  
you for no good reason other than --  
you love me.

BRIAN

You're pathetic. And so's this car. I  
have just enough time to get it washed.

(checking himself in the side-  
view mirror)

How do I look?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

Like a million bucks.

BRIAN

Don't sell me short.

MICHAEL

Ten!

That's more like it.

BRIAN

Wish me luck.

MICHAEL

You don't need it.

Brian slides in the car, pauses, then pulls out a crushed  
soft drink can from under his ass. He hands it to Michael --  
then speeds off.

CUT TO:

21

INT. LIMBO

21

SHANDA LEER

And now, for my next number --  
(lip-synching)

"Are the stars out tonight, I don't  
care if it's cloudy or bright, 'cause I  
only have eyes for you, dear --"

CUT TO:

22

INT. A FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

22

Brian is huddled at the table having a power lunch with a  
series of CLIENTS. The bodies in the chair opposite him  
change, but the conversation is continuous. START ON Brian,  
in a series of CUTS. (NOTE: His attire remains the same,  
only the meal course changes.)

(CONTINUED)

22

CONTINUED: I can deliver the same innovative campaigns you've come to expect --

22

BRIAN (cont'd)  
-- but with the personal attention only  
Because I consider you to be my most important client --

CLIENT #1  
Sounds like  
BRIAN (cont'd)  
Because I regard you as my most valuable account --

BRIAN (cont'd)  
Because there's no one whose close, personal friendship means more to me than yours --

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (cont'd)  
I want you to be the first to know --  
(a nine-month pregnant pause)  
I'm starting my own agency.

Now show the CLIENTS, in a series of CUTS, in the same chair.

CLIENT #1  
(Ms. Eye-conic Optics)  
That's great news, Brian --

\*

CLIENT #2  
(Mr. Brown Athletics)  
Congratulations, Brian --

CLIENT #3  
(Mr. Frawley's Open Fire Steak Houses)  
Way to go, partner!

BACK TO BRIAN

BRIAN  
It's a big step, I know. But I'm confident that by focusing on a small, select list of clients --

BRIAN (cont'd)  
I can deliver the same innovative campaigns you've come to expect --

BRIAN (cont'd)  
-- but with the personal attention only a boutique operation can offer.

CLIENT #1  
Sounds like a hell of a plan --

(CONTINUED)

dinner -- as Debbie serves and hovers. She hands Michael a platter, with a loving smile.

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28.

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

DEBBIE  
Want to pass the ziti, sweetie?

MICHAEL:

Sure, Ma. CLIENT #2

If anyone can pull it off, Brian, you can --

She kisses the top of his head.

CLIENT #3

I like what I'm hearing, partner!

See how nice she's being? That's how I know.

BRIAN

That's why I'd like to put Eye-conic Optics --

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (cont'd)

Brown Athletics --

BRIAN (cont'd)

Frawley Open Fire Steak Houses --

BRIAN (cont'd)

At the Very Top of my list.

As he offers them a personal, heartfelt smile:

CUT TO:

22A INT. LIMBO

22A

SHANDA LEER

(her big finish)

-- 'cause I only have eyes for yooooou!"

As she's rewarded with wild applause:

CUT TO:

23 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

23

Michael, Ben, Hunter and VIC are around the table eating dinner -- as Debbie serves and hovers. She hands Michael a platter, with a loving smile.

DEBBIE

Want to pass the ziti, sweetie?

MICHAEL

Sure, Ma.

She kisses the top of his head.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

(aside, to Ben)

See how nice she's being? That's how I know.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

What?

MICHAEL

She's pissed. She's just waiting for  
the right moment, then --

(he gestures a smack on the  
head)

-- WHAM!

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2) (you worked up an appetite  
climbing all those mountains! Come sit  
down.

The DOORBELL rings. Debbie goes to answer it.

We didn't come to eat, we came to see you.

DEBBIE  
Right there -- !

DEBBIE  
VIC  
(stopping her)

Will you sit down and finish eating  
already?

\*  
\*

Follow Vic as he goes to the door, opens it, FINDS A MOTHER  
SUPERIOR and a BOY in lederhosen, suspenders and a feathered  
cap. Vic blinks for a BEAT, then:

VIC (cont'd)  
Lindsay --? Mel --?

The others see them as they enter.

DEBBIE  
Jesus Christ. What the hell are you  
two supposed to be?

MELANIE  
I'm Mother Superior.

LINDSAY  
And I'm Frederich.

VIC  
I can only dream of what perversions go  
on in your house.

BEN  
Let me guess: "The Sing-A-Long Sound of  
Music."

LINDSAY  
It was a benefit for Pediatric AIDS.

DEBBIE  
I bet you worked up an appetite  
climbing all those mountains! Come sit  
down.

MELANIE  
We didn't come to eat. Hunter -- give  
me a dollar.

DEBBIE  
If you're short of cash -- Vic, get the  
tea canister.

(CONTINUED)

23

CONTINUED: (2)

23

CUT TO:

INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT LINDSAY

24

It has to come from Hunter.

FIND Brian and Justin, having drinks at the bar.  
HUNTER

What for? JUSTIN

By the time you're done decimating his  
client list, Vance'll be asking you for

I petitioned the court to appoint me  
your guardian ad litem.

HUNTER

(CONTINUED)

My -- what?

MELANIE

It means I can represent you at the  
hearing. Explain to the judge why your  
mother shouldn't get custody, and why  
it's in your best interest to remain  
where you are with Michael and Ben. So  
what do you say?

HUNTER

(shoving the buck in Melanie's  
hand)

Fuck, yeah!

BEN

(to Michael)

See, I told you we should do this the  
right way --

DEBBIE

Instead of taking off without telling  
your mother!

And she whacks Michael on the head.

MICHAEL

Ow! I told you!

DEBBIE

Now -- who's for tiramisu?

CUT TO:

24 INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

24

FIND Brian and Justin, having drinks at the bar.

JUSTIN

By the time you're done decimating his  
client list, Vance'll be asking you for  
a job!

(CONTINUED)

HOT HUNK  
I was going to ask if I could borrow  
the stool.  
BRIAN  
We'll see.

As the Hunk grabs the stool, Justin, Emmett & glare:  
JUSTIN  
Stop being modest.

Buy you a drink?  
BRIAN  
I was aiming for smug.

He turns to pay the BARTENDER. Justin has scribbled something on a napkin. (CONTINUED)

JUSTIN  
How do you like the name I picked out  
for your new agency.

BRIAN  
"Kinnetik."

JUSTIN  
With two n's.

Brian tries it on for size. Likes it.

BRIAN  
Clever.

JUSTIN  
It's genius!

As Brian rewards the genius with a kiss, RAMP TO Emmett, sitting at a table alone, five empty Cosmo glasses in front of him. As he sips his sixth, a HOT HUNK interrupts.

HOT HUNK  
Excuse me, but if no one's sitting  
here --

EMMETT  
I'm very flattered you should ask, so  
don't take this the wrong way, but fuck  
off.

HOT HUNK  
I was going to ask if I could borrow  
the stool.

As the Hunk grabs the stool, gives Emmett a glare:

BRIAN (O.S.)  
Buy you a drink?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2) (topping each other)

Liza? Robert Downey, Jr.? Matthew Perry? Ben Affleck?

EMMETT

(without looking up)

I'm very flattered you should ask, so don't take this the wrong way --

He looks up, world-weary, sees Brian and Justin.

EMMETT (cont'd)

Hello, boys.

BRIAN

Sorry, Miss Deitrich, I mistook you for a friend of mine, Emmett Honeycutt.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

We're going to Babylon -- want to come?

EMMETT

I'm not in the mood for men, muscles or music. I prefer to stay here and get shit-faced.

He starts to get up, teeters, they catch him.

BRIAN

You passed shit-faced about ten miles back.

EMMETT

So I've had a few cocktails. Does that qualify me for rehab? Besides, I've already been there.

JUSTIN

Did you see Ted?

EMMETT

And you'll never guess who's there with him --

BRIAN/JUSTIN

(topping each other)

Liza? Robert Downey, Jr.? Matthew Perry? Ben Affleck?

EMMETT

Blake, the tweaked-out twinkie! Isn't that great?

\*  
\*

BRIAN

Some assholes never learn.

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED: (3)

24

EMMETT

Oh, he's learned, all right. He's even gotten a degree. He's a drug abuse counselor! A few days in Doctor Boytoy's care, and Mr. Schmidt is as good as new!

(raising his Cosmo)

Well, let's all drink to his remarkable recovery.

(CONTINUED)  
CUT TO:

25

INT. MICHAEL AND BEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

25

Michael and Ben make love. So into each other. So deep, so passionate, so true. When they've finished, Michael stretches out, satisfied -- as Ben nibbles on his ear.

MICHAEL

Stop -- you know that drives me nuts!

BEN

(continuing innocently)

Does it?

(feeling Michael's dick)

Then how about we go again?

MICHAEL

That'd make -- three.

Ben pulls Michael into an embrace, kissing him, almost devouring him.

BEN

God, I missed kissing you, holding you --

He opens his eyes -- sees Michael staring at him.

BEN (cont'd)

What --?

MICHAEL

Just looking. You're so -- beautiful.

BEN

You're kinda cute, yourself.

MICHAEL

Sometimes I wonder why -- I mean -- how you could ever love me.

BEN

What're you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

25

CONTINUED:

25

INT. BRIAN'S LOFT BLDG. - STAIRS/LANDING - DAY

26

Justin tears up the stairs, yanks open the door to DISCOVER -- no, not a naked trick, but -- something truly surprising. His mother

MICHAEL

I feel like such an idiot. Running off with Hunter the way I did. I should've stayed here -- like you said -- instead of putting everybody through "Mikey and Hunter's Excellent Adventure". It was so -- not cool. So -- immature. What kind of message was that to send to a kid?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Hold it -- just hold it. What you did was -- incredible.

MICHAEL

It was?

BEN

Not only do I admire you for having the balls to do it, I'm actually kind of -- (confessing) -- jealous.

MICHAEL

Jealous --?

BEN

How you put Hunter's safety above your own -- without a second thought. I wouldn't call that immature. I'd call that --

(searching, then)

Love. Listening to your heart, no matter what anyone tells you. The same way you decided to love me. I'd say that was a very good message.

And as Ben takes Michael in his arms and they begin to make love again:

CUT TO:

26

INT. BRIAN'S LOFT BLDG. - STAIRS/LANDING - DAY

26

Justin tears up the stairs, yanks open the door to DISCOVER -- no, not a naked trick, but -- something truly surprising. His mother (JENNIFER), with Brian.

\*

JENNIFER

It's a "special place".

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

What --?

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26

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

26

It's either cut my expenses or cut my wrists. I opted for the tidier of the two --

BRIAN

"Special" as in "unique, fabulous, one-of-a-kind". Or "special" as in "There're schools that can teach him to dress himself"?

JUSTIN

Mom --?

JENNIFER

Hi, honey.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Hi, honey.

JENNIFER

(back to Brian)

Special as in -- it appeals to a certain kind of person. A person who's single, who doesn't have children, a person who --

(a beat)

Let's face it, Brian. It's a fuckpad.

JUSTIN

Mom -- what're you doing here?

BRIAN

(to Jennifer)

So how much do you think I can get for it? \*

JUSTIN

Get for what?

BRIAN

I'm selling the loft.

JUSTIN

What --?

BRIAN

It's either cut my expenses or cut my wrists. I opted for the tidier of the two --

JENNIFER

(to Brian)

Listen, I'll call you later with some comps -- we can set a price.

(she gives Justin a peck, then to Brian)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER (cont'd)  
Oh, and -- I won't be charging  
commission. After all you've done for  
Justin, it's the least I can do.

Jennifer leaves. As soon as she's gone:

JUSTIN  
You're not selling your loft! It's  
your home!

BRIAN  
Not for long.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN  
But I thought you were starting your  
own agency -- that your clients were  
going with you --

BRIAN  
They turned me down.  
(sighs)  
The best laid plans of mice and ad-men --

JUSTIN  
There must be some other way. A loan --

BRIAN  
A hundred thousand dollars in debt and  
unemployed? Not exactly a good risk.

JUSTIN  
A job at another firm --

BRIAN  
I got an offer. In Scranton. At half  
my salary.

JUSTIN  
Christ! You should never have listened  
to me.

BRIAN  
I didn't.  
(beat)  
I listened to me. Anyway, it's only  
four walls and a floor. And top-of-the-  
line appliances. And stainless steel  
countertops. And imported Italian  
fixtures --

JUSTIN  
It's more than that. It's where we  
made love for the first time.

(CONTINUED)

Debbie comes in with the mail.

BRIAN

That wasn't love. I gave you a rimjob  
and fucked your brains out.

Justin looks at him. Finally:

We had everything we needed over at

Justin.  
JUSTIN

It was love to me.

Brian turns, looks at him for a beat. Then as he draws  
Justin to him, kisses him: (CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

27 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

27

Emmett sits at the table, trying to go over the books -- but  
he's too hung over. Vic whacks at some crab legs -- which  
makes Emmett's head throb more.

EMMETT

Vic --? Vic --! Do you have to do  
that?

VIC

Well, I guess we could give each guest  
a claw and a straw and let 'em suck the  
meat out.

EMMETT

(holding his head, wincing)  
What I need's an Advil -- or a gun. \*

VIC

Someone had a few too many last night.  
How about I wash the greens -- gently?

Emmett nods, gratefully, as Vic searches drawers.

VIC (cont'd)

Where's the fucking strainer? Can't  
find a thing in this goddamn kitchen!

Debbie comes in with the mail.

DEBBIE

What's the matter with my goddamn  
kitchen?

VIC

We had everything we needed over at  
Ted's.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEBBIE  
And get laid in the bushes!  
VIC  
Anyway, Michelangelo's not his real  
name. It's his faerie name. We all  
had 'em. Mine was--

DEBBIE

So go to Ted's!

VIC

We can't go to Ted's!

EMMETT

(snapping)

Would you two, please?

(then to Vic)

Make a list and I'll pick everything  
up.

(CONTINUED)

Debbie "mouths" to Vic: "What's with him?" Vic "mouths" back:  
"Ted". Debbie shakes hew head, goes through the mail.

DEBBIE

"You have won the Sweepstakes". New Q-  
Mart opening. Fund-raiser for the  
Center -- Christ, another one? Oh,  
look, Vic. A postcard for you -- from  
Michelangelo.

EMMETT

That must've been lost in the mail a  
long time.

VIC

Actually, we met at a faerie gathering.

EMMETT

The Tony Awards?

VIC

It's a group of gay men who gather in  
the woods to rediscover our Spirit of  
Joy.

DEBBIE

And get laid in the bushes!

VIC

Anyway, Michelangelo's not his real  
name. It's his faerie name. We all  
had 'em. Mine was--

DEBBIE

Cherub!

(CONTINUED)

27

CONTINUED: M(2)lo's. But since we're saving up for the new arrival. I'll have to find some other means to express my joy.

27

VIC

I went right after I was diagnosed. I was devastated. Didn't know how I'd go on. So I swallowed my skepticism. Turned out to be one of the most healing experiences of my life.

DEBBIE

(after a beat, to Emmett)  
You know, honey, maybe that's what you need.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

Running around in the woods with a bunch of fairies? Thanks -- but I'll stick to Advil.

As he pops one:

CUT TO:

28

EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - DAY

28

Justin is walking on the rue de la Liberté with Melanie, Lindsay and Gus. People are out, spirits are high, COUPLES hold hands and kiss. SOMEONE seated at a street café is reading the paper. The headline reads: "STOCKWELL INDICTED".

\*  
\*

LINDSAY

"Stockwell Indicted". Seeing a headline like that restores my faith in humanity.

MELANIE

Makes me want to buy shoes!

JUSTIN

Birkenstocks?

MELANIE

Manolo's. But since we're saving up for the new arrival, I'll have to find some other means to express my joy.

As Justin watches a passing COUPLE kiss.

JUSTIN

And we all have Brian to thank.

LINDSAY

He's the Wizard of Oz!

(CONTINUED)

I do.

(beat)

But I also know Brian would never be beholden to anyone.

JUSTIN

There wasn't any wizard -- and there isn't any "Concerned Citizens For The Truth".

(off their curious looks)

He paid for that commercial against Stockwell himself.

LINDSAY/MELANIE

What --? No!

JUSTIN

Now he's a hundred thousand dollars in debt. He has to sell off everything he owns -- even his loft.

MELANIE

I never dreamed I'd be saying this, but I wish there was something we could do.

JUSTIN

I tried offering him the money I made from Rage, but he wouldn't take it.

LINDSAY

He's too proud for that.

JUSTIN

So what are we supposed to do -- stand around and watch while he loses everything?

LINDSAY

It's his choice.

Justin looks at her, dismayed and disappointed.

JUSTIN

"It's his choice"? That's it? I thought you cared about him.

LINDSAY

I do.

(beat)

But I also know Brian would never be beholden to anyone.

CUT TO:

29 INT. FAMILY COURT - DAY

29

Rita Montgomery's petition for custody. Rita, dressed conservatively, is seated with her attorney, LANDREY. Hunter sits with his guardian ad litem, Melanie, along with Michael and Ben. Presiding is a no-nonsense middle-aged female JUDGE.

LANDREY

You have in front of you, Your Honor, Mrs. Montgomery's social worker's report, including a psychological evaluation, testimony from her new employer, a signed lease for her apartment rental, an approved credit card application --

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER

(muttering)

Did he include her "Girl Scout badge"?

LANDREY

Hopefully, in reviewing these documents, Your Honor will concur that Mrs. Montgomery has taken admirable initiative in overcoming severe hardship -- so that James may be returned to her care.

HUNTER

Mind if I heave?

The Judge glares over at him.

MELANIE

Don't say another word.

MICHAEL

Just sit there and shut up.

MELANIE

Your Honor --?

JUDGE

Miss Marcus --

(CONTINUED)

29

CONTINUED:

29

MELANIE

The Judge  
glances at  
the papers

I don't mean to diminish Rita Montgomery's "admirable initiative," but you'll also find another set of documents, including her arrest for stabbing her husband, testimony from neighbors recounting her repeated drug abuse, as well as a statement from her own son describing how she coerced him from the age of twelve on into acts of prostitution --

CUT TO:

RITA

That's not true!

HUNTER

The fuck it's not!

JUDGE

Young man, please allow your lawyer to speak for you. That's what she's being paid for.

HUNTER

(muttering)

Yeah. A buck --!

MELANIE

Now she wants him back. Well, I contend Rita Montgomery is unfit to be James' mother, and that it would be detrimental to his physical and emotional well-being to be returned to her so-called care.

The Judge takes a moment to glance at the papers.

LANDREY

Your Honor, may I--

JUDGE

No, Mr. Landrey, you may not. I'd like to examine all documents in my chambers. I'm calling a fifteen minute recess.

The Judge rises, makes her way out of the courtroom. Rita gives her attorney a dragon's glare -- then as she shoots a look over at her opponents:

CUT TO:

30 INT. TED'S CONDO - DAY

30

Emmett has just entered the darkened condo. Curtains are drawn, lights OFF. Not wanting to waste any time, he heads straight for the kitchen, turns ON the light, starts gathering stuff.

EMMETT

Salmon poacher -- popover pan --  
strainer --  
(searching)  
-- strainer, strainer, strainer --

TED (O.S.)

Under the sink.

Emmett screams, the poacher and the pan go flying as he SEES Ted sitting on the couch in the dark.

EMMETT

Jeeeesusfuckingmaryandjoseph! You  
scared the shit out of me--!

TED

Sorry.

EMMETT

(recovering)  
I didn't know you were back. Vic  
needed some things, so --

TED

Don't mind me. Just take whatever you  
want and --

EMMETT

What are you doing here? Aren't you  
supposed to be --

TED

In rehab? I left.

EMMETT

Kudos to your counselor. That must be  
the fastest cure on record.

TED

What with the cost of health care these  
days, they don't like you to linger.  
In fact, they're thinking of putting in  
a drive-thru window.

(no response from Emmett)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TED (cont'd)

Don't you think that's funny? A drive-thru window --

EMMETT

Yeah, Ted, you're a real scream. I don't know when I've ever had more laughs than with you.

TED

Then it must make you feel good to know the last one's on me. How I've managed to totally fuck up my life --

(CONTINUED)

As Emmett heads toward the door:

EMMETT

Sorry, but I don't plan pity parties.

TED

I'm not asking for your pity. I'm just stating a fact.

EMMETT

Well, here's another one. You're not going to get better sitting on the sofa. So why don't you take your sardonic wit and your superior, "I'm not like those other losers" attitude and get your ass back there!

\*

TED

What for? So they can fix me? Well, it's too late. I'm beyond repair.

(beat)

I have nothing. No future, no friends, no job, no lover -- so what's the point? I might as well be dead.

Emmett looks at Ted for a beat, his face registering Ted's despair. Then:

EMMETT

Then do it.

TED

What --?

EMMETT

I said, then do it. Go on. Kill yourself. You'll be doing us all favor. Only, don't be a man about it. Be a queen.

(CONTINUED)

30

CONTINUED: (2)

30

He quickly searches through Ted's CD's, puts on the death scene from "Tosca".

EMMETT (cont'd)

A little mood music --

He goes over to the desk, picks up a letter opener, hands it to Ted.

EMMETT (cont'd)

Not quite a dagger, but it'll do in a pinch. And the good news is you can finally be Maria Callas. Plunge it into your heart, like Tosca!

TED

Tosca didn't stab herself. She jumped off a roof.

EMMETT

Even better.

(collecting his pots and pans)

Feel free to scream and sing as loud as you want. Nobody's listening.

As he exits -- leaving Ted alone:

CUT TO:

31 INT. FAMILY COURT - DAY

31

Recess is over. The Judge has returned.

JUDGE

Having reviewed all the documents, there is no doubt, Mrs. Montgomery, that alcohol and drug abuse, as well as a violent homelife, made you unfit to give your son the proper care he deserved.

(a beat)

Still, there is every indication that you've made great strides to break free from your past. It is also my overwhelming personal feeling that a child belongs with its natural parent, as long as that parent can provide a safe, nurturing environment.

(a beat)

This court therefore, is willing to give you a second chance by granting you custody of James.

(to Hunter)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

31

CONTINUED:

31

JUDGE (cont'd)

I hope you will also give your mother a second chance. Kiss on the cheek

HUNTER

There's no way in hell I'm going with her! I'll run away first!

JUDGE

If you do, young man, I will be forced to hold you in contempt.

(a beat)

This court is adjourned. (CONTINUED)

She rises, starts to collect her things. \*

HUNTER

Ben! \*

MICHAEL

I knew this would happen.

(desperate)

Mel --! \*

MELANIE

(to him, Ben and Hunter)

I'm sorry, honey. We did the best we could. \*

Rita comes over to Hunter.

RITA

Jimmy -- baby -- it's gonna be better now. I promise.

A tense beat. Everyone wondering what Hunter's response will be. Even the Judge pauses to watch this touching reunion. \*

HUNTER

(after a beat)

Sure it will, Mom. Can I give you a kiss?

RITA

Well, sure, honey --

Hunter catches Rita off-guard by giving her a big kiss on the lips. Michael and Ben can't believe what they're seeing.

RITA (cont'd)

(surprised)

Jimmy --

Hunter smiles, then:

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER

Oh by the way -- I forgot to tell you.  
I'm HIV-positive.

A beat. Rita stares at him.

CONTINUED

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

RITA

That's not very funny, Jimmy.

HUNTER

It's true.

(re: Ben and Michael)

Ask them.

Rita eyes dart to Michael and Ben.

BEN

It's true.

Horrified, she angrily wipes her mouth, curses her son:

RITA

You fucking dirty little faggot! You  
trying to give it to me?

Then she notices everyone looking at her -- including the  
Judge. She regrets it instantly -- but it's too late.

JUDGE

Ms. Marcus, Mr. Landrey, may I see you?

CUT TO:

32 EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - NIGHT

32

Brian and Justin make their way down The Street. Brian's  
glumly puffing on a smoke.

JUSTIN

My mom told me there's someone who's  
interested in buying the loft.

BRIAN

Couple of designer fairies. Can't wait  
to turn it into a Moroccan bordello.

As they approach Woody's:

JUSTIN

Let's go have a drink.

BRIAN

Better read the fine print.

He points to a sign: "Benefit Tonight"

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

BRIAN (cont'd)  
Another fucking benefit. Wonder what  
worthy cause it is this time -- "Send a  
Tranny to Summer Camp"?

JUSTIN  
Come on!

Before Brian can refuse, Justin heads up the stairs. Brian  
sighs, surrenders, FOLLOWS him into:

33 INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

33

Shanda Leer is entertaining the packed crowd:

SHANDA LEER  
(the big finish)  
"-- Can't forget, don't regret what I  
did for love. What I did for love.  
What I did for -- love!"

Brian eyes the proceedings with disdain.

BRIAN  
Some suckers can't wait to give their  
money away.

JUSTIN  
It's for a worthy cause.

Suddenly, the CROWD parts and Brian SEES practically everyone  
he knows: Michael, Ben, Hunter, Emmett, Debbie, Vic, Rodney,  
Melanie and Lindsay, who steps forward.

BRIAN  
What the fuck's going on --?

LINDSAY  
We're having a little fund-raiser --  
for a very special organization.  
Perhaps you've heard of them -- "The  
Concerned Citizens For the Truth"?  
(off his total bafflement)  
You see, they've made a significant  
contribution to our community. They've  
helped us and now we hear they're in  
need of -- well, a little help  
themselves. So, we -- the community --  
would like to give something back. It  
may not be all that they need. But  
it's a start.

(handing him an envelope)  
We're hoping you'll accept this.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LINDSAY (cont'd)  
(a beat)  
On their behalf.

Everyone applauds. Brian looks over to Justin, who also applauds, obviously in on this.

LINDSAY (cont'd)  
Well, go on -- open it.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

Brian hesitates, then opens the envelope. There's a check. He looks at it for a beat, at all the faces staring at him, waiting for him to speak. Finally:

BRIAN

I've -- uh -- only known "The Concerned Citizens For The Truth" for a short time. But long enough to know they don't like accepting handouts -- I mean, charitable donations.

(a beat, then)

However, in this case I guess I'll have to tell them that sometimes we can all use a little assistance. So they're going to have to swallow their fucking pride and just say --

(trying not to lose it)

-- thank you.

As everyone applauds, starts to hug and kiss a reluctant Brian, Shanda Leer comes forward in her most fabulous creation. A pink SPOT hits her as she lip-synchs a classic version of:

SHANDA LEER

"When you're down and out, lift up your head and shout, There's gonna be a Great Day!"

CUT TO:

34 EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - NIGHT

34

The Woody's crowd is leaving, coming down the stairs. First, FIND Michael, Ben and Hunter, followed by Lindsay and Melanie.

HUNTER

The night's still young. What do you say we hit some after-hours clubs?

MICHAEL

Excuse me, young man?

BEN

You've got school tomorrow.

HUNTER

Christ, don't tell me you're going to turn into my goddamn parents.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

(giving him a poke)

Hey, you heard what the Judge said.  
You can live with Ben and Michael  
provided you stay on your best  
behavior.

LINDSAY

And we intend to keep an eye on you,  
just to make sure you do.

Hunter rolls his eyes -- great! Now FIND Debbie, Vic, Rodney  
and Emmett coming down the stairs.

DEBBIE

I knew I'd live long enough to see gay  
marriages. But I never thought I'd  
live to see Brian Kinney accept help --  
and say thank you!

VIC

I thought I even saw a tear in his eye --  
(to Emmett)  
Didn't you?

EMMETT

(mopey, distracted)  
Huh --?

Debbie picks up on his mood.

DEBBIE

I'm worried about you, honey. That  
famous flame of yours is just about  
out.

VIC

What you could use is a generous  
sprinkling of faerie dust.

Now FIND Brian and Justin coming downstairs.

Shanda Leer, out of drag, toting her gown and a wigbox,  
breezes past them. He's actually a young man (DARREN), not  
much older than Justin. \*

JUSTIN

Hey, Darren, Shanda Leer was great  
tonight. \*

SHANDA LEER

It's what I do for love! \*

(CONTINUED)

He blows him a kiss, heads off. Brian and Justin walk down the street, a few paces behind her. \*

JUSTIN

Now you and half of gay Pittsburgh can sleep soundly in your bed, knowing the loft is still yours. \*

BRIAN

Half of gay Pittsburgh can sleep soundly in their own bed. \*

Brian puts an arm around Justin, pulls him close, as they walk down the street. The CAMERA FOLLOWS them from behind. But suddenly it veers off, FOLLOWS DARREN (SHANDA) instead, as he turns the corner, walks alone down a darkened street. Suddenly, THREE GUYS get out of a parked car, block her way. Shanda tries to turn back, but they stop her. As we HEAR the vintage vocal of "It's Gonna Be A Great Day" while they beat the shit out of him: \*

FADE OUT. \*

THE END