

queer as folk

EPISODE 405

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Production Draft (WHITE) 11-06-2003

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PRODUCTIONS

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queerasfolk

EPISODE 405

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
HUNTER.....Harris Allan
and as
DEBBIE NOVOTNY.....Sharon Gless

GUEST CAST

CYNTHIA	GUS
CODY BELL	CHRIS HOBBS
LARRY JACOBS	RODNEY
JEANETTE ARLEN	TRICK
ANNA SOKOWSKI	MIDDLE-AGED GAY MAN

FADE IN:

1 INT. KINNETIK - BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY 1

BRIAN strides into his office, where Cynthia awaits.

CYNTHIA

Your coffee.

(then)

Your calls.

(then)

Your advance copy of "Heat". *

Brian opens it to the marked page with the ad for Endovir, gazes at it with a satisfied smile.

BRIAN

Has Remson seen it yet?

She holds up a letter.

CYNTHIA

Fax just came. He's over the moon.

Brian responds with a shrug and a smile -- so what else is new? -- as Ted comes in with a stack of papers and a movie quote.

TED

"Brian Kinney is Back With A Vengeance!"

CYNTHIA

This campaign is going to start a revolution: the "No more bullshit" era of advertising.

TED

Next thing you know, there'll be soft drink jingles about rotting teeth and hyper-active kids.

Cynthia leaves as Ted plops the pile of papers in front of him.

BRIAN

What the fuck's that?

TED

Oh, just a few thousand forms for you to sign: insurance, pension and benefits, S.S.I. --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRIAN

I can think of so many more interesting things to do with my right hand.

TED

I'm sure you can. But in the meantime, I need to attend to the business of setting up your business.

(beat)

Oh, and I also want to give you this.

He hands him a personal-looking letter -- marked "Brian".

BRIAN

Who's it from?

TED

Actually -- it's from me. It's part of the Program. It's called Making Amends.

BRIAN

How sweet -- a Twelve-Step Valentine.

(he opens it, reads it)

I'm touched, Theodore.

(then shaking the envelope upside down)

But where's the check?

TED

That's about the response I expected.

Ted smiles, leaves, closing the door behind him. Brian picks up the phone, dials. Waits. Then, frustrated:

BRIAN

The point of having a cell phone is that you leave it on! Where the fuck are you?

QAF IV - Ep. 405 - Production Draft (WHITE) - 11/06/03 CUT TO:

CONTINUED:
INT./EXT. FIRING RANGE - DAY

Bang! Bang! Bang!

A CLOSE-UP of a gun as someone fires it. PULL BACK TO REVEAL CODY, aiming at a target. Three holes to the head. He lowers the gun, turns to Justin with a satisfied smile.

JUSTIN

You're a really good shot.

(CONTINUED)

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CONTINUED: 2

CODY

He does as I practiced a lot when I was a kid. Tin cans in the backyard. Rabbits.

JUSTIN

You had a gun when you were a kid?

CODY

I had a six-shooter, pardner, before I had a two-wheeler.

(adding)

(CONTINUED)

Where I grew up, everyone did.

JUSTIN

I wasn't even allowed to have a cap pistol.

CODY

Try it.

JUSTIN

No, thanks.

CODY

Come on -- don't be a sissy.

Justin bristles at the word.

CODY (cont'd)

You're right-handed right? *

Justin nods. Cody places the gun in Justin's right hand. *

CODY (cont'd)

Okay, so hold it with your right hand -- *

He grabs Justin's shoulders and turns him toward the target: a black silhouette of a head and upper torso. *

CODY (CONT'D)

Now line up your sight with your right eye, then pull the trigger. *

JUSTIN

That's it?

He does as Cody's instructed -- but his hand starts to shake.

CODY

Nervous?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUSTIN

It's my gimp hand, from when I was bashed. Acts up sometimes.

CODY

Okay, then try this. Left hand to your wrist to steady it. Arms out straight. Spread your legs a bit for balance.

(beat)

Now it's got a kick, so don't resist. Just ride it, like the hottest piece of ass you ever had.

(CONTINUED)

Justin laughs, then fortifies himself, concentrates on the target. BANG!

JUSTIN

Wow, that was intense!

CODY

How the West Was Won. But next time, try to hit the target.

Justin tries, misses again.

JUSTIN

Shit. This is harder than I thought.

CODY

Tell you my little secret.

(pointing to the figure on the target)

See how it has no face? Well, I give it one. Someone who deserves a bullet between the eyes.

JUSTIN

Yeah? Like who?

CODY

Like Wayne, the captain of the football team. He and his jock buddies held me down while he carved "Faggot" on my ass with a penknife. Bang. Or Mr. Mackley, who made me show it to the class. Bang. Or my father, who slapped me across the face when I told him what they did. Bang.

JUSTIN

Sounds like you've got no shortage of targets.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: 2

Cheese omelette
pancakes
CODY
I bet you've got a few too.

Justin thinks for a beat, points the gun, fires. Bang. A bullet hole suddenly rips through the faceless face -- right between the eyes. Cody hoots!

CODY (cont'd)
Works every time!
(beat)
So who were you thinking of?

(CONTINUED)

But Justin doesn't answer.

CUT TO:

3 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY 3

A SERIES OF COMIC BOOK PANELS

Depicting the finished version of Justin's rough sketches from Episode Two, in which Rage and Zephyr stuff the villain's dick in his mouth. A VOICE (O.S.) reads the caption-bubble "Suck your own dick, motherfucker!" PULL BACK to reveal we are in:

The Liberty Diner. BEN is the VOICE reading the panel. He looks up at MICHAEL, who sits across from him in a booth.

BEN
This is definitely some pretty strong stuff.

MICHAEL
That's how Justin wanted it. He insisted it had to be that way.

Just then, Debbie appears with two plates of eggs.

DEBBIE
Here're your eggs, boys.
(to Ben)
Whites only. Tomatoes. No bread.
(to Michael)
Cheese omelette. Sausage. Side of pancakes --
(eyeing the panel upside down)
-- Jesus Christ! What the hell's that?
(craning her neck)
Upside down, it looks like someone's getting his dick stuffed in his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICHAEL

(turning it to face her)
Right-side up, too.

DEBBIE

Gratuitous man-sex is one thing.
Personally, I don't mind it.

MICHAEL

We know.

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

But gratuitous violence -- that's
another story.

BEN

Actually, I don't consider it
gratuitous. In fact, I'd argue that --
disturbing as these images may be --
they're a legitimate expression of
every gay man's outrage at being
victimized, and therefore can be
justified as a passionate and
uncompromising work of art.

DEBBIE

Maybe so. But he's still got his dick
stuffed in his mouth.

As Vic comes in, Debbie goes over to him.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

Where the fuck have you been? I was
about to issue a missing person's
report.

VIC

You have no idea how much work it
takes, unpacking a new place.

DEBBIE

Did you forget to unpack the phone?
(then, eagerly)
So, when do I get to see it?

VIC

Sis, we haven't even gotten the dish
towels yet! But as soon as it's
presentable, you'll be the first
official guest.

(CONTINUED)

As Michael quickly gobbles

CUT TO:

INT. MELANIE AND LINDSAY

UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

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3

CONTINUED: Lindsay, Gus in hand, follows. 3

DEBBIE

and (To Michael and Ben)
You heard that, boys! I'm the first
official guest!

As they go off: clients --

MICHAEL

Did you mean what you said -- about it
being an uncompromising work of art?

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Absolutely. Every word. And I hope
you'll be as honest with me about my
book.

A beat. Michael wants to confess something.

MICHAEL

Ben --

BEN

It's okay. I only gave it to you a few
days ago. I shouldn't have said
anything.

MICHAEL

It's not that. It's --

He looks into his loving lover's eyes.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

-- that I haven't finished it yet. But
as soon as I do --!

As Michael quickly gobbles his food.

CUT TO:

4 INT. MELANIE AND LINDSAY'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY 4

Melanie, briefcase in hand, is on her way to the office.
Lindsay, Gus in hand, follows:

MELANIE

Even if I agreed to relinquish the case
and let Larry head up the proceedings,
Jeanette and Anna would never agree.

LINDSAY

Of course not. They're not just your
clients -- they're our friends.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: Get everything

Except for you.

MELANIE

They embrace

And they're depending on me. They gave me their trust -- and I gave them my promise. There's no reason in the world why I shouldn't be representing them.

LINDSAY

You don't have to convince me. There's a bond -- a sisterhood -- that some people simply can't understand.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

Mainly, men.

Just then, Emmett emerges from the attic studio, carrying the last of his belongings in a carton.

EMMETT

Men? Did someone mention men?

LINDSAY

One in particular.

MELANIE

My partner, Larry Jacobs.

EMMETT

Those high-powered, aggressive, Jewish lawyer types don't do it for me.

(off Melanie's look)

Except for you, of course.

FOLLOW THEM as they go down the stairs:

4A INT. MELANIE & LINDSAY'S HOUSE - STAIRS/FRONT ENTRY - DAY

4A

They stop by the front door, as Emmett puts down the box, puts on his coat.

LINDSAY

Got everything, sweetie?

EMMETT

Except for you.

*

They embrace him, warmly.

MELANIE

You're going to be fine.

(CONTINUED)

Emmett gives each of them a kiss -- and with a final look,
he's gone. The girls close the door.

(sighs)
Alone at last

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CONTINUED: 4A

(patting Gus on the head)
Aren't you forgetting someone?
(then patting her tummy)
And someone else on the way?
(then)

EMMETT
I know. I'm a big boy -- some say very
big. So there's no reason for me not
to have my own place.

CUT TO:

LINDSAY
Once you fix it up, you're going to
love it.

EMMETT
It came already furnished and ready to
move in. All I have to do is unpack.

MELANIE
There you go -- even better!

LINDSAY
Gei gasundheit, Em.

MELANIE
Close enough.
(translating)
"Go in good health".

Emmett picks up his carton.

EMMETT
Guess this is it.

LINDSAY
(to Gus)
Say bye-bye to your Auntie Em, sweetie.

Emmett gives each of them a kiss -- and with a final look,
he's gone. The girls close the door.

LINDSAY (cont'd)
(sighs)
Alone at last.

MELANIE
(patting Gus on the head)
Aren't you forgetting someone?
(then patting her tummy)
And someone else on the way?
(then)
We're not going to be alone for another
eighteen years.

CUT TO:

5 INT. DAPHNE'S APARTMENT - DAY 5

DAPHNE is staring at the target -- the one with the bullet hole through the head -- that Justin is tacking to the wall.

DAPHNE
You went to a firing range?

CODY
Once he got the hang of it, he was awesome.

(CONTINUED)

Daphne glances at Cody, then back to Justin.

DAPHNE
I thought you hated guns. You even signed that petition in high school.

JUSTIN
I still do. But you can't believe what it felt like -- bang!

CODY
See that bullet hole right between the eyes?

(he points to the bullet hole in the head)
He was thinking of someone when he fired it -- but he wouldn't tell me who.

DAPHNE
I bet it was Chris Hobbs.

JUSTIN
Daph --!

DAPHNE
Thought so.

CODY
Who's he?

JUSTIN
Some high school jock I jerked off once. After that, he didn't like me very much.

DAPHNE
(on the contrary)
I always suspected he was secretly in love with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: ally admit?

JUSTIN
I was too afraid to say anything. So I
just stood there -- like a fucking
CODY
Sounds like some of the assholes I went
to school with. They were probably
afraid of being queer.

CUT TO:

JUSTIN
Whatever he was, when he saw me at the
prom, dancing with Brian --

DAPHNE
Which, for the record, was un-fucking
real --

JUSTIN
He freaked. Afterwards, he followed me
to the parking garage with a baseball
bat.

(he blinks back not tears --
but anger)
He smashed my skull. I was in a coma,
then rehab, for almost six months.

DAPHNE
And can you believe the creep
practically went free? A slap on the
wrist and a few months community
service in an AIDS hospice.

CODY
I can believe it.

JUSTIN
The last time I saw him he was there
mopping the floor. He said I'd end up
just like the others. That I deserved
to die.

CODY
I hope you fuckin' beat the shit out of
him.

Justin finally admits:

JUSTIN
I was too afraid to say anything. So I
just stood there -- like a fucking
faggot.

CUT TO:

6

INT. EMMETT'S NEW PAD - DAY

6

Emmett is giving Brian and Michael a tour of his new pad -- an imitation of Brian's loft. Similar furniture, a bed on a platform, a big framed light for a headboard. Brian chomps on a messy submarine sandwich he's brought with him.

EMMETT

Instant apartment -- just add Trick and stir!

(to Michael)

So whaddaya think?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

It's great, Emm. I'm really happy for you.

EMMETT

(suddenly panicked)

Careful, Brian -- you're dripping. I don't want any stains on the sofa.

BRIAN

Not yet, anyway.

He runs to the kitchen, as Brian surveys the room.

BRIAN (cont'd)

You know, this place is vaguely reminiscent of somewhere --

(he thinks, then)

-- my loft! Did I fuck your decorator?

Emmett runs back with a plate -- but too late! A big glob of mayonnaise drops on the sofa.

EMMETT

I asked you to be careful! I hope they included some cleaner in the kitchen.

He rushes off, as Brian examines a chair.

BRIAN

You call this crappy knock-off a Barcelona chair? More like a Tijuana chair.

But Michael's not listening. He's staring out the window. Brian goes to him, playfully wraps his arms around him.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN
And what do you really think?
BRIAN (cont'd)
Wanna bite?
(then)
You can have some of my sandwich, too.

BRIAN
Kinda like MICHAEL
Cut it out.

A beat, then:

MICHAEL (cont'd) (CONTINUED)
I told Ben a lie. A big, fat lie.

BRIAN
Okay, who'd you fuck?

MICHAEL
No one.

BRIAN
Then make it quick.

Michael takes a breath, with difficulty confesses:

MICHAEL
I finished his book three days ago.
But I told him I'm still reading it.

As Brian absorbs this shocking revelation:

BRIAN
That's it? That's the "big, fat lie"?
A big fat lie is "I won't cum in your
mouth" --

EMMETT
(calling from the kitchen)
But not on the sofa!

MICHAEL
He wants me to be honest. To tell him
what I really think.

BRIAN
And what do you really think?

MICHAEL
It was kinda -- boring.

BRIAN
Kinda like him?
(Michael shoots him a look,
then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED: Hi, guys. What're you --? Did we have a meeting scheduled --? 6

BRIAN (cont'd)

There's an He's your partner, Mikey. You have to sit him down, take his hand and say "Honey, it's a steaming piece of horseshit".

MICHAEL

Could you say that to Justin?

Without me?

BRIAN

Fortunately, the lad's a genius.

MICHAEL

You're so helpful.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

And you're pathetic. If you can't be honest then what kind of a relationship have you got?

As he sits down in the mock-barcelona chair.

BRIAN (cont'd)

(with disdain)

Just a -- cheap imitation.

CUT TO:

7 INT. MELANIE'S LAW FIRM - LARRY JACOBS' OFFICE - DAY 7

Melanie opens the door to Larry's office.

MELANIE

Larry, the court just sent us --

She stops, surprised to see JEANETTE ARLEN and ANNA SOKOWSKI, sitting in his office.

LARRY

Come in, Mel --

MELANIE

(after a beat)

Hi, guys. What're you --? Did we have a meeting scheduled --?

There's an awkward tension in the air.

LARRY

Mel -- Jeanette, Anna and I've been discussing the case --

MELANIE

Without me?

(CONTINUED)

Blip! Take Two.

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CONTINUED:

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Ben, I finished your book, and even though it's a little long in places, I'm sure with some editing --

JEANETTE

Blip! Take Three (trying to explain)

Mel --

MICHAEL (cont'd)

But she's too upset, starts to weep. Especially if you have trouble sleeping.

ANNA

Blip! Take Four (stepping in)

Mel, we all know how conservative this new judge is --

(CONTINUED)

JEANETTE

Believe me, it has nothing to do with you!

ANNA

We love you. You know that.

JEANETTE

It's just that -- we feel --

She can't go on. As far as Melanie's concerned, she doesn't have to.

MELANIE

I'll spare you the explanation -- and the tears. I understand. Completely.

CUT TO:

8

INT. RED CAPE COMICS - DAY

8

Michael is behind the counter -- practicing. Blip! Take One.

MICHAEL

Ben, I finished your book, and you made some really interesting choices --

Blip! Take Two.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Ben, I finished your book, and even though it's a little long in places, I'm sure with some editing --

Blip! Take Three.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

It's a great read. Especially if you have trouble sleeping.

Blip! Take Four.

(CONTINUED)

Ben waits as the customer pays for it -- all in change.

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8 CONTINUED: (counting out the change) 8

That's one -- that's two -- that's
threese -- forty-five, forty-six, forty-
seven, forty-eight, forty-nine --
fifty! Come back again -- we can
MICHAEL (cont'd) we can
Ben, I finished your book and --

The customer leaves. BEN (O.S.)
You did?

BEN
Michael looks up, surprised to see:

About the book --

MICHAEL

Ben! What're you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

BEN

I was just on my way to the gym, so I
thought I'd poke my head in, say hello.

(excited)

So you finished it!

MICHAEL

Yeah. And I just want to say that --

His cell phone BEEEEEPS!

MICHAEL (cont'd)

'Scuse me.

(he answers it, relieved)

Hi, Ma! Sure, Ma. Okay, Ma. Bye, Ma.

(clicking off)

That was Ma.

BEN

Got it. And you just want to say --?

Just then, A CUSTOMER comes over with a comic book. Michael
holds up a finger -- "In a min."

MICHAEL

Hi! That'll be three-fifty.

Ben waits as the customer pays for it -- all in change.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

(counting out the change)

That's one -- that's twooo -- that's
threese -- forty-five, forty-six, forty-
seven, forty-eight, forty-nine --
fifty! Come back again -- we can
always use the change.

The customer leaves.

BEN

(desperately cheerful)

About the book --?

(CONTINUED)

TED
Thanks, guys.

MICHAEL
All I can say is -- more of these to
deliver. So, I'll see you later?

Just then, Ted comes into the shop.

MICHAEL/BEN
Later -- MICHAEL (cont'd)
(thrilled)
Teddy --!

TED
Hope I'm not interrupting --

(CONTINUED)

BEN
(cranky)
Not at all!

TED
That's good --
(then)
Because I have something for each of
you.
(handing them each a letter)
You don't have to read them now if you
don't want --

BEN
Great.

He starts to pocket it.

MICHAEL
(to Ben)
I'd love to!

Michael opens his, so Ben opens his. Ted waits anxiously as
they both read.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
That's very thoughtful. And very
brave. Of course we forgive you.

He embraces Ted. Ben does, too.

TED
Thanks, guys.
(an awkward beat)
Well, I've got a few more of these to
deliver. So, I'll see you later?

MICHAEL/BEN
Later -- see you --

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: 8

As soon as he's gone, Ben locks the door behind him, turns the "open" sign to "closed".

BRIAN
Why -- is BEN loaded
Now then. The book.

He looks down the barrel.
MICHAEL

Right.
(taking a deep breath)
Ben, I finished your book, and --
(finally)
I loved it!

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

9 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - BATHROOM / BEDROOM - NIGHT 9

Justin's peeing, humming to himself. He finishes, flushes, checks himself in the mirror then heads to the bedroom to get under the covers with Brian. Instead, he finds himself staring down the barrel of a GUN. He stops dead at the sight of Brian, lying there naked, a cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth, pointing the pistol. Tres Alain Delon. *

JUSTIN
What are you doing?

BRIAN
Lookie what I found -- Sunshine's new play-toy.

JUSTIN
You had no business going through my things.

BRIAN
I was looking for a light.

JUSTIN
Bullshit. You were snooping. Now give it back.

Instead, CLICK. Brian cocks it.

JUSTIN (cont'd)
Careful --!

BRIAN
Why -- is it loaded?

He looks down the barrel.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN
We're trying to stop violence before it happens. JUSTIN
No, it's just meant to scare people.

BRIAN
(laughs) BRIAN
For someone who never saw a western on principle, you suddenly have an awfully keen interest in firearms. Where'd you get it?

JUSTIN
Cody gave it to me. (CONTINUED)

BRIAN
How thoughtful. What's next -- a Small Nuclear Device?

JUSTIN
(re: the gun)
It's necessary we have one. After what happened the other night, we could've been killed.

BRIAN
Play with this long enough, you will be.

JUSTIN
Would you just hand it over --?

He reaches for the gun -- but Brian pulls it away.

BRIAN
You're not running around the streets with a concealed weapon.

JUSTIN
I told you --

BRIAN
"It's necessary". So that you and Cody can be the Gay Avengers? Heroes of the Resistance? Martyrs to the Cause?

JUSTIN
We're trying to stop violence before it happens.

BRIAN
(laughs)
By starting it?

Justin glares at him for a beat.

(CONTINUED)

She finds a huge, fat, phallic candle.

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CONTINUED:

DEBBIE (cont'd)

9

How 'bout this for Vic and Rodney?

EMMETT

JUSTIN

You wouldn't think it's so funny if you'd been the one who was bashed.

DEBBIE

Yeah, but I'm not sure it'll fit!

BRIAN

(dead-serious)

She roars, No one said it's funny.

JUSTIN

They hate us! They want us dead! Now give me the goddamn gun! (CONTINUED) *

As he grabs the gun from Brian:

CUT TO:

10 INT. BED, BATH AND BEGONE - DAY

10

Emmett, accompanied by Debbie, is pushing his big, overstuffed basket down one of the aisles. He stops in front of Candles and Candlesticks.

EMMETT

Just what I've been looking for!

He grabs several bags of tea candles, puts them in his basket.

DEBBIE

Whatcha gonna do with all those candles?

EMMETT

Create an intimate environment in which to entertain my, uh -- "guests".

DEBBIE

More like create a fuckin' fire hazard.

She finds a huge, fat, phallic candle.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

How 'bout this for Vic and Rodney?

EMMETT

(dubious)

Is there someplace they can put it?

DEBBIE

Yeah, but I'm not sure it'll fit!

She roars, then puts it back.

(CONTINUED)

10

CONTINUED:

(diplomatic)
It would look perfect in your place.
But I'm not sure Vic would appreciate
it.

10

EMMETT

Sorry I'm not being more helpful
finding them a housewarming gift. So
far, everything I've picked out is for
myself. ~~well!~~ He said they needed some.

She holds up a pair with a bright, crowing rooster on each.
You're trying to make your house a
home.

(a beat)

Meanwhile, my home's become a house.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

Guess you miss him a lot.

DEBBIE

Don't you dare ever tell him that. I
don't want him feeling bad for leaving.

EMMETT

My lips are sealed -- for that, anyway.

Then:

DEBBIE

It's just been a long time since I
lived alone. I'd forgotten how lonely
it can get.

(beat)

'Specially when you're older. When
you're used to having someone there --
to fight with, to laugh with, to bug
the shit out of you.

(beat)

Nobody could bug the shit out of me
like Vic.

(then picking up some hideous
object)

How about this?

EMMETT

(diplomatic)

It would look perfect in your place.
But I'm not sure Vic would appreciate
it.

DEBBIE

(putting it back, then
spotting)

Dish towels! He said they needed some.

She holds up a pair with a bright, crowing rooster on each.

(CONTINUED)

Are you going to lie there filing your
claws and feeling sorry for yourself?

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10 CONTINUED: bed? 10

Melanie's in bed, filing her nails. Magazines are littered
about along with a bag of Pepperidge Farm cookies. She
nearly drops her file. DEBBIE (cont'd)

Perfect for a couple of old cocks!

MELANIE

Jeezus Brian! You could at least
knock!

CUT TO:

11 INT. LINDSAY & MELANIE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 11

Lindsay is very distraught. Brian, who's come from work, is
with her.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

I've tried talking to her, but she
wouldn't listen. Now she refuses to
leave the bedroom.

BRIAN

Eventually they come out to feed, but
if I were you, I'd lock up the
livestock.

LINDSAY

Brian!

BRIAN

Well why the fuck'd you call me? I
have no practical skills whatsoever in
talking lesbians out of trees.

LINDSAY

But you do have a remarkable ability to
put things into perspective. See them
in a purely objective, practical way.

CUT TO:

11A INT. LINDSAY & MELANIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY 11A

BRIAN

Are you going to lie there filing your
claws and feeling sorry for yourself,
or are you going to get your ass out of
bed?

*
*

Melanie's in bed, filing her nails. Magazines are littered
about along with a bag of Pepperidge Farm cookies. She
nearly drops her file.

*
*
*

MELANIE

Jeezus Brian! You could at least
knock!

(CONTINUED)

the voice of the straight white male
asshole.

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11A CONTINUED:

MELANIE

11A

This was MY CASE!

BRIAN

It's business, Mel. So suck it up and
If I'd knocked, you'd have told me to
fuck off.

Objective and practical enough for you?

MELANIE

Fuck off!

(to Lindsay)

Can you believe this?
Too late.

He picks up a nearby stuffed animal, sits down on the bed
looking concerned.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN (cont'd)

Now then, show me on the doll where the
bad man touched you.

She scrambles off the bed, furious.

MELANIE

You want to know where he touched me?
Right here!

(indicating her belly)

In the gut -- and you know why?
Because a lesbian couple with a child
have just fired their lesbian lawyer
with a child so that some straight
white male asshole can argue their
case!

BRIAN

Makes sense to me.

MELANIE

Why am I not surprised?

BRIAN

The courts have always been partial to
the voice of the straight white male
asshole.

MELANIE

This was MY CASE!

BRIAN

It's business, Mel. So suck it up and
move on.

(to Lindsay)

Objective and practical enough for you?

MELANIE

(to Lindsay)

Can you believe this?

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN looks around, then removes the gun from his back-pack.

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11A CONTINUED: Here -- you should keep it. 11A

CODY

It's okay -- I've got others.

LINDSAY

(a beat, then)

Actually -- I agree with him. *

Melanie just looks at her.

(grins)
Some people LINDSAY (cont'd) others
As much as I understand why you're
upset -- and believe me, I would be,
too -- I also understand Jeanette and
Anna's position. They have to do
everything they possibly can to --

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

I don't want to hear it, okay?

She pushes past them, leaving them standing there.

LINDSAY

Mel --!

BRIAN

At least she's out of the bedroom.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY 12

Justin and Cody are walking past a construction site along the wooden walkway with a ply-wood perimeter fence.

JUSTIN

He almost took it away from me.

CODY

Christ. Well, next time be more careful.

Justin looks around, then removes the gun from his back-pack.

JUSTIN

Here -- you should keep it.

CODY

It's okay -- I've got others.

JUSTIN

Others --?

CODY

(grins)

Some people collect stamps, others
collect injustices -- I collect these!

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: Well, go on. 12

But Justin doesn't -- can't -- move. Chris starts to walk away. Cody calls to him: Justin hands it to Cody, nonetheless. They stop at the entrance to the work area.

HOBBS!

JUSTIN

What're we doing here?

Don't --

CODY

Chris stops. Waiting for someone. Then walks over.

JUSTIN

A new posse member?

(CONTINUED)

CODY

(laughs)

Not exactly!

Just then, a GROUP OF HARDHATS exit the site on their way home. Among them is a FOREMAN in a white shirt. Cody points him out.

CODY (cont'd)

(ironic)

Say -- don't you know that guy?

Justin wonders who the fuck Cody's talking about, then sees:

CHRIS HOBBS

Removing his hardhat as he talks and laughs with a couple of workers. Justin stands frozen, his mind racing with fear, like wheels spinning on ice.

JUSTIN

How -- how'd you find him?

CODY

(sardonic)

Looked him up in the phone book. Now you can tell him what a piece of shit he is.

(beat)

Well, go on.

But Justin doesn't -- can't -- move. Chris starts to walk away. Cody calls to him:

CODY (cont'd)

HOBBS!

JUSTIN

Don't --!

Chris stops, looks their way, then walks over. *

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: "Catcher in the Fuckin' Rye"; Ever hear of it? 12

BEN
A variation thereof. So what do you
Do I know you?

CODY
No---
(gesturing to Justin)
But I believe you know my friend.
How do you figure that?

Chris turns to Justin. It takes a second to recognize him. *

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
Taylor? What the fuck're you doing
here? *

(nothing from Justin)
Looking for a job?
(still nothing)
Sorry, we don't have any openings. At
least not the kind you like.

Cody turns to Justin, expecting him to respond. But it
doesn't happen. Chris snorts, turns and walks away --
leaving Justin standing there. As Justin looks over at Cody,
ashamed to even look him in the eye: *

CUT TO:

13 INT. MICHAEL & BEN'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT 13

Ben, looking quite dazzling in party clothes, is giving
himself a final check in the mirror. Pleased with what he
sees, he goes into --

13A INT. MICHAEL & BEN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 13A

-- where Hunter is sprawled out on the sofa with a book and a
bag of chips.

BEN
Whatcha reading, pal?

HUNTER
"Catcher in the Fuckin' Rye". Ever
hear of it?

BEN
A variation thereof. So what do you
think?

HUNTER
I think Holden Caufield's a fag.

BEN
How do you figure that?

(CONTINUED)

HUNTER
So what's the big occasion -- your
golden anniversary?
HUNTER
"Catcher" is a bottom, right?

BEN
I finished my book. And the most
important critic gave it a rave review.
As he plants a hot'n heavy on Michael:
I'm calling the Dean of Carnegie-Mellon
tomorrow, see if there's a position in
the Lit Department.

Michael comes out of the bedroom -- looking just as dazzling.

MICHAEL
Ready --

(CONTINUED)

BEN
Whoa! Don't you look hot.

MICHAEL
You look hotter!

HUNTER
Where're you two "hotties" going?

BEN
Dining and dancing.
(to Hunter)
"Now, I want you in bed by eleven
o'clock sharp".

MICHAEL
(to Hunter, playing along with
Ben)
"Come give me a kiss, but careful,
don't muss my hair".

Michael and Ben roar with laughter.

HUNTER
You two are freaks.

BEN
Now that we're parents, we're required
to make "parent remarks".

HUNTER
So what's the big occasion -- your
golden anniversary?

BEN
I finished my book. And the most
important critic gave it a rave review.

As he plants a hot'n heavy on Michael:

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

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13A CONTINUED:

Sorry -- must have the wrong place.

13A

(then)
Would you happen to know where Vic
Grassi lives?

HUNTER

Before he can answer, Rodney appears at the door.
I thought you said it was a snooze.

RODNEY

Ben stops, mid-smooch.

(awkwardly)
Come on in: BEN
What?

MICHAEL

I never said that! I said I fell
asleep.

(CONTINUED)

(off Ben's look)

Because it was late! I was tired!

Ben looks at him, laughs.

BEN

Michael, I told you, you could be
honest --

MICHAEL

I was honest!
(quickly)
Now, come on -- let's get out of here.

As Ben heads out the door, Michael whispers:

MICHAEL (cont'd)

"Just wait'll I get home, young man".
That's another parent remark.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. VIC & RODNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

14

Debbie, carrying a brightly wrapped gift, rings the DOORBELL.
The door opens. Standing there is a MIDDLE-AGED GAY MAN.

DEBBIE

(thrown)
Sorry -- must have the wrong place.
(then)
Would you happen to know where Vic
Grassi lives?

Before he can answer, Rodney appears at the door.

RODNEY

Debbie --!
(awkwardly)
Come on in --

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

DEBBIE

I'm sure. There always is. But, you see, I don't attend parties to which I

She follows him into: ~~wasn't invited.~~

14A INT. VIC & RODNEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

14A

It doesn't matter --

Where a dinner party for eight (a mixed group of men and women) is in progress. The table is set with flowers, candles, wine. Vic breezes in from the kitchen with the piece de resistance.

*

VIC

Lobster souffle, si vous plait --!

(CONTINUED)

But he stops when he sees Debbie standing there.

VIC (cont'd)

Sis --

DEBBIE

I -- uh -- stopped by to give you this. A little housewarming gift. But I see the house is already warm.

RODNEY

As long as you're here, why don't you stay?

DEBBIE

I'd love to. But I can't. Other plans.

She turns to go.

VIC

Sis -- wait.

(to the group)

This is my sister, Debbie.

The guests ad-lib hellos.

*

VIC (cont'd)

There's plenty.

DEBBIE

I'm sure. There always is. But, you see, I don't attend parties to which I wasn't invited.

VIC

It doesn't matter --

(CONTINUED)

14A CONTINUED:

14A

EMMETT

A trick from a trick.

Emmett returns, finds DEBBIE Trick finishing dressing.

Actually, it does -- because you told me you weren't ready to have people over and when you were, I'd be the first.

TRICK

Vic and Rodney exchange a look. ~~Emmett's~~ waiting.

VIC

This dinner was just an impromptu affair.

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

I'm sure. Everybody just happens to have lobster souffle in the pantry for when five -- make that six -- unexpected guests arrive.

(a beat)

Well, I'll leave you to your friends.

As she thrusts the present into his hand and walks out.

CUT TO:

15 INT. EMMETT'S NEW PAD - NIGHT

15

PAN ACROSS MANY LIGHTED CANDLES to FIND Emmett, vigorously scrubbing a spot on the sofa. A STRAPPING NAKED TRICK stands nearby.

TRICK

Sorry. I didn't mean to shoot so far.

EMMETT

You have remarkable aim.

TRICK

(offering a helpful hint)
Club soda always does the trick.

As Emmett takes the sponge and cleanser to the kitchen:

EMMETT

A trick from a trick.

Emmett returns, finds the trick finishing dressing.

EMMETT (cont'd)

Leaving already?

TRICK

Gotta get back. My roommate's waiting.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: room. Lindsay's waiting up for her in her bathrobe, poking at a bowl of cereal.

15

LINDSAY

(offering) EMMETT

You have a roommate?

TRICK

No, (nods) you.

Every Thursday night we make a big bowl of popcorn, curl up on the sofa and watch "Friends".

EMMETT

That's nice.

(CONTINUED)

TRICK

We share everything: clothes, stories about who we fucked -- so you live alone?

EMMETT

First time. Never could afford it 'til now.

TRICK

Great place. But I think even when I can afford it, I'll still want to live with someone. But that's me. I like the sound of someone else breathing. Well, see ya.

EMMETT

See ya --

And he's gone. Emmett stands in his new domain. Alone. He takes a deep breath, goes from candle to candle blowing them out. Then he sits for a beat in the dark. There's not even the sound of someone else breathing.

CUT TO:

16 INT. MELANIE & LINDSAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

16

Melanie comes in, locks the front door, crosses through the dark living room. Lindsay's waiting up for her in her bathrobe, poking at a bowl of cereal.

LINDSAY

(offering)

Granola?

MELANIE

No, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: MELANIE 16

Fuck!

She takes the cereal LINDSAY
Have you eaten anything? Because I
could fix you a--

I was simply trying to say that I
understand MELANIE and Anna's
position. I said, no thank you. You had to
make it about you.

A strained beat.

LINDSAY
(finally)

(CONTINUED)

Well, as long as you're back, safe and
sound, I guess I'll go to bed.

As she starts to go, Melanie lays into her:

MELANIE
I can understand Brian siding with
Larry and Jeanette and Anna --that's no
surprise -- but you!

LINDSAY
I'm entitled to express my opinion.

MELANIE
You betrayed me.

Melanie glares at her, then makes her way to the kitchen,
Lindsay follows:

16A INT. MELANIE & LINDSAY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 16A

LINDSAY
Do you really think I would ever betray
you?

MELANIE
Where're the Oreos?

LINDSAY
We're all out.

MELANIE
Fuck!

She takes the cereal bowl from Lindsay, starts to consume it.

LINDSAY
I was simply trying to say that I
understand Jeanette and Anna's
position. But as usual, you had to
make it about you.

(CONTINUED)

Justin clearly understands the intention of Cody's remark.

MELANIE
"As usual"?

Justin rises
LINDSAY
If this were about Gus, you know goddamn well we'd do whatever it takes to make sure we won him back -- even if it meant firing a friend and hiring a straight man.

MELANIE
Not just a friend -- a lesbian mother defending another lesbian mother!

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY
This isn't about that. It's about Jeanette's son. Like Brian said -- it may not be right and it may not be fair. But it's how it is.

CUT TO:

- 17 SCENE MOVED & RENUMBERED (18A) 17 *
- 18 INT. DAPHNE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 18

Justin and Cody are back at Daphne's apartment. Justin, still shaken from his encounter with Chris Hobbs, paces agitatedly, inhales deeply on his cigarette. *

JUSTIN
I'm such a fucking coward.

DAPHNE
You should never have gone to see Chris Hobbs in the first place! Why are you digging up this shit all over again?

CODY
Because it was never finished.
(he looks at Justin)
It's still not.

Justin clearly understands the intention of Cody's remark.

CODY (cont'd)
You've got to stand up to him. Let him know you're not afraid.

Justin rises, starts to move away.

JUSTIN
No fucking way!

(CONTINUED)

18

CONTINUED: ~~Hub?~~

18

BEN

Shakespeare.

Cody stops him.

BRIAN

An eye for an eye, or turn the other
It's the only way. To even the score.

He takes out a scrap of paper with an address scribbled on it, hands it to Justin.

CODY (cont'd)

We can pay him a little visit tomorrow night -- after work.

(CONTINUED)

*
*

Daphne hears that.

CUT TO:

18A INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

18A

*

Thumpa-thumpa at full throttle. A crush of MEN and muscle. FIND Brian at the bar, lost in thought, oblivious to the hot guys cruising him. Michael and Ben come over, call for a couple of beers. Brian doesn't notice them. Michael snaps his fingers.

MICHAEL

Hey! What are you doing?

BRIAN

Thinking.

BEN

In Babylon? That's a first.

Brian turns to them.

BRIAN

Is it better to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or take arms and by opposing end them?

MICHAEL

Hub?

BEN

Shakespeare.

BRIAN

An eye for an eye, or turn the other cheek? Fight fire with fire, or do unto others as you would have them -- you know the rest. So which is it?

(CONTINUED)

18A

CONTINUED: But doing nothing -- letting someone else bash your brains in -- is.

18A

He downs his scotch.

BEN

Depends on the situation.

Thus conscience does make cowards of us

all.

BRIAN

You saying there's no absolute right or wrong? That morality is merely a matter of circumstance?

He walks away. Michael and Ben watch him go, wondering what the fuck that was about. Then, Ben turns to Michael.

MICHAEL

What the fuck're we talking about?

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Say someone bashes you. Nearly kills you. Do you have the right to go out and do the same?

BEN

Of course not.

BRIAN

Why?

MICHAEL

Because two wrongs don't make a right.

BEN

Besides, there're laws.

BRIAN

What if the law failed to protect you? What if the law doesn't give a shit? Then what?

MICHAEL

Then -- I guess -- you have to take the law into your own hands.

BEN

No. Violence is never a moral choice.

BRIAN

But doing nothing -- letting someone else bash your brains in -- is.

He downs his scotch.

BRIAN (cont'd)

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.

He walks away. Michael and Ben watch him go, wondering what the fuck that was about. Then, Ben turns to Michael.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: I don't know.

(then)
I guess sometimes I didn't know where
the story was going.

BEN

Come on, babe -- let's dance.

Uh-huh.

He leads Michael to the dance floor. They start to go
through their moves. Ben flashes a loving smile at Michael,
who flashes him one back, then:

are what the main

character wanted.

BEN (cont'd)

So just for my own curiosity -- you
thought my book was -- slow? Dull?
Boring?

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

What --? I never said that.

BEN

(reiterating)

Just for my own curiosity.

MICHAEL

(after a beat)

Certain parts felt -- a little long.
That's all.

BEN

Which parts?

MICHAEL

I can't remember.

BEN

Try.

MICHAEL

It was just -- an over-all feeling.

BEN

Over-all -- plot? Characters? Theme?
What?

MICHAEL

I don't know.

(then)

I guess sometimes I didn't know where
the story was going.

BEN

Uh-huh.

MICHAEL

And I wasn't quite sure what the main
character wanted.

(CONTINUED)

18A

CONTINUED: stairs with a basket of laundry. Things are still rather chilly between them. 18A

LINDSAY

Are you going into work today?
Uh-huh.

MELANIE

What for? MICHAEL
Or what it all added up to.

LINDSAY

I haven't checked.
(a little testy)
Maybe this isn't the time or place to talk about it.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

You're the one who brought it up --

BEN

In fact, I never should've asked you to read it in the first place.

MICHAEL

Why do you say that?

BEN

Let's face it, you don't exactly have a literary background.

MICHAEL

Excuse me if I didn't go to Harvard or Yale.

BEN

It's not your fault that you're more Justice League than Ivy League.

Michael looks at Ben, stung by his remark. As they continue to dance -- in silence:

CUT TO:

19 INT. MELANIE & LINDSAY'S HOUSE - FRONT ENTRY - DAY

19

Melanie is coming down the stairs -- as Lindsay is making her way up the stairs with a basket of laundry. Things are still rather chilly between them.

LINDSAY

Are you going into work today?

MELANIE

What for? Mail come?

LINDSAY

I haven't checked.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 19

TED (cont'd)
I'm making my amends. I've written them to everyone.
As they go their separate ways, Melanie heads to the front door opens it, is startled to find Ted standing there, letter in hand. don't know what to say -- except that I wish I could change everything.

TED
Melanie finishes (also startled) his a squeeze.
I was just about to put this under your door --

Melanie looks up the stairs, angrily, then grabs her coat, orders Ted: (CONTINUED)

MELANIE

Come on!

CUT TO:

20 EXT. LIBERTY AVENUE - DAY 20

Melanie is devouring a bag of donuts, Ted is offering his sympathy.

TED
At least when Wertshafter fired me, I had the comfort of knowing he was a bigoted straight man with an enlarged prostate. But in your case, to be dumped by two fellow lesbians, well, the betrayal must be crushing, staggering, all-consuming --

MELANIE
(downing another donut)
Thanks. I feel so much better now.

TED
(handing her the letter)
Here, I wanted to give you this. It's for you and Linz.

She takes it, opens it, starts to read.

TED (cont'd)
I'm making my amends. I've written them to everyone.
(a beat)
Everyone, that is, except Emmett. I don't know what to say -- except that I wish I could change everything.

Melanie finishes reading, gives him a squeeze.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: Oh, and there's a young woman, says she knows you -- needs to talk to you, right away. 20

Brian looks over. SEES MELANIE

I'll give this to Linz. I know she'll be as proud of you as I am.

Why, Daphne, what an unexpected surprise. TED is looking particularly (relieved and grateful)

Thanks, Mel --

(then)

You know what's funny? When I was growing up, my father had the Serenity Prayer taped to the refrigerator. He wasn't in AA. Never touched a drop. He just liked it. I saw it ten times a day. Knew it by heart, of course. Never meant anything. And now -- it's been my salvation.

(reciting)

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference"

(CONTINUED)

As Melanie hears that:

CUT TO:

21 SCENE OMITTED 21

22 INT. KINNETIK - HALLWAY / BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY 22

Brian returns from his noon work-out at the gym, heads down the office at a determined pace, followed by Cynthia.

CYNTHIA

The new lay-outs for Parcheesy Pizza are on your desk and Leo Brown's expecting your call.

As they approach his office:

CYNTHIA (cont'd)

Oh, and there's a young woman, says she knows you -- needs to talk to you, right away.

Brian looks over, SEES Daphne. *

BRIAN

Why, Daphne, what an unexpected surprise. You're looking particularly enchanting today.

(CONTINUED)

22A INT. DAPHNE'S APARTMENT - DAY 22B
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22 CONTINUED: Justin stands, contemplating the target on Daphne's wall. He
exhales from a cigarette, smoke rising. He turns from it, as
if hearing Brian's words: "At least he'll know he stood up.
Fought back. That he didn't run away".

DAPHNE

Mind if you hit on me later? I have to
talk to you.

CUT TO:

23 INT. MELANIE'S LAW OFFICE - LARRY JACOBS' OFFICE - DAY 23
CUT TO:

Larry is in a meeting with Jeanette and Anna.
22A INT. KINNETIK - BRIAN'S OFFICE - DAY 22A

Moments later.

(CONTINUED)

DAPHNE

I don't mean to be a snitch, but I
thought you should know.

Brian absorbs what she's told him.

BRIAN

Thanks for the heads-up. But there's
not much I can do.

DAPHNE

Can't you talk to him?

BRIAN

Been there, tried that. Hasn't done
much good.

DAPHNE

But what if he gets into a fight? What
if he gets hurt?

Brian seriously considers that possibility, then: *

BRIAN

At least he'll know he stood up.
Fought back. That he didn't run away.

CUT TO:

22B INT. DAPHNE'S APARTMENT - DAY 22B *

Justin stands, contemplating the target on Daphne's wall. He
exhales from a cigarette, smoke rising. He turns from it, as
if hearing Brian's words: "At least he'll know he stood up.
Fought back. That he didn't run away". *

CUT TO: *

23 INT. MELANIE'S LAW OFFICE - LARRY JACOBS' OFFICE - DAY 23

Larry is in a meeting with Jeanette and Anna.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

Em, honey --

LARRY

I want to go over a few of the points.
I'll be making in my opening argument --

Just then, the door opens and Melanie steps in. There's an awkward beat.

MELANIE

Excuse me, Larry -- I don't mean to interrupt. I just stopped in to say that -- I understand your decision, that I don't take it personally, and that I'm willing to offer my assistance and support. Considering the importance of the case -- it would be remiss of me not to.

(CONTINUED)

She's about to leave. Anna, Jeanette and Larry exchange a look, then:

LARRY

Mel --? How about staying? We could use your assistance and support.

As she joins them, Larry continues:

LARRY (cont'd)

As I was about to explain to Jeanette and Anna, we need to convince Judge Walker that the law was misinterpreted --

CUT TO:

24 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

24

Debbie's on the couch, watching TV, eating from a pint of ice cream. The DOORBELL rings, she answers it, surprised to find:

EMMETT

Hey, Deb.

DEBBIE

Em, honey --!

EMMETT

Hope you don't mind my dropping by, but I saw your light on --

DEBBIE

I'm glad you did. Come on in.

(CONTINUED)

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24

CONTINUED: In fact, walking over here, I was thinking about when Michael and I shared the apartment. You know what the best times were? Just sitting around on the sofa after one of us had given some trick the boot, eating chips, or ice cream, gabbing 'til all hours. Sometimes we'd fall asleep, our heads in each other's laps --

24

EMMETT
Just for a minute. So how'd Vic like his housewarming gift?

DEBBIE
Let's just say he wasn't expecting it.

Debbie covers (changing the subject)
How 'bout some ice cream?

He sees three opened pints on the coffee table.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT
It's like a soda fountain! All that's missing is the whipped cream.

She reaches under a pillow, produces a can, squirts.

DEBBIE
So what're you doin' wanderin' around 'stead of spending a nice quiet evening at home fuckin' your brains out?

EMMETT
There's only so much fucking your brains out one can do.

DEBBIE
(concerned, feeling his forehead)
You have a temperature?

EMMETT
It's just nice to have -- someone to talk to, that's all.

DEBBIE
Yeah, I know what you mean.

As she shovels a large spoon of ice cream into her mouth.

EMMETT
In fact, walking over here, I was thinking about when Michael and I shared the apartment. You know what the best times were? Just sitting around on the sofa after one of us had given some trick the boot, eating chips, or ice cream, gabbing 'til all hours. Sometimes we'd fall asleep, our heads in each other's laps --

Debbie covers their legs with a quilt.

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED: Michael senses the tension. Ben looks up, goes back to reading. 24

MICHAEL

I picked up some chicken. Extra
What good's an ice cream sundae without
two spoons?

BEN

Maybe later.
EMMETT
(looking at her ice cream)

What kind's that? Michael puts down his take-out, joins him. A beat.

DEBBIE

Mint chocolate chip.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

Don't mind if I do.
(dipping in)
Whatcha watching?

DEBBIE

"The Bad and the Beautiful"'s about to
start.

EMMETT

Oh my God. My all-time fave!

As he settles in.

DEBBIE

So, how was your last trick?

EMMETT

Big dick. Teeny brain.

DEBBIE

The best kind!

As they giggle, devour their ice cream:

CUT TO:

25 INT. MICHAEL & BEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

25

Michael comes in carrying take-out, finds Ben, sitting,
reading his manuscript. Ben looks up, goes back to reading.
Michael senses the tension.

MICHAEL

I picked up some chicken. Extra
veggies, no potatoes. Hungry?

BEN

Maybe later.

Michael puts down his take-out, joins him. A beat.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

I'm sorry, Ben.

MICHAEL

Going over your book?

For what? Being honest?

BEN

And with that, he takes his manuscript, goes into the bedroom.

MICHAEL

(picking up Hunter's copy of
"Catcher in the Rye")

I thought this was boring, too -- and
it's supposed to be a classic.

(beat)

But let's face it. If I knew the
difference between a great book and a
lousy one, I'd have gone to Harvard or
Yale, instead of barely finishing
junior college --

BEN

I heard from my publisher.

MICHAEL

(hopeful)

You did?

BEN

They had a few comments of their own.

MICHAEL

See? That's what you need. A
professional opinion, from people who
know what they're talking about.

BEN

They felt the main character's
motivation was unclear. That the story
was overly-complex and convoluted. And
thematically, it lacked force and
focus. In other words -- exactly what
you said.

(a beat)

So they passed.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry, Ben.

BEN

For what? Being honest?

And with that, he takes his manuscript, goes into the bedroom.

CUT TO:

CHRIS
But that's what you are, Taylor. Now
if you don't mind, I'd like to kick
back, have a beer --

26 EXT. CHRIS HOBBS' HOUSE - NIGHT

26

CODY
A late-model American sedan pulls into the driveway and Chris
Hobbs gets out. He heads up the walkway at the side of a
modest tract house, an area relatively hidden from the rest
of the neighborhood. my way -- faggots.

Fumbling with his house keys, he looks up at the door
surprised to find himself confronted by Justin and Cody.

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS
Christ, Taylor. What are you doing
here -- stalking me? Fuckin' creeps.
Get outta here, or I'll call the
police.

Cody steps forward.

CODY
Not until he gets what he came for.

CHRIS
What's that?
(to Justin)
You want to suck my cock? *

JUSTIN
I want you to apologize.

CHRIS
For what?

JUSTIN
For bashing me. For causing me brain
damage and permanent injury. For
giving me nightmares every night for
two years. For filling me with fear
every time I walk out the door. For
treating me like a subhuman who doesn't
deserve to live.

CHRIS
But that's what you are, Taylor. Now
if you don't mind, I'd like to kick
back, have a beer --

CODY
Tell him you're sorry!

CHRIS
Get out of my way -- faggots.

(CONTINUED)

There. See? You scared me. Now put
the gun away --

He pushes Justin roughly aside, goes to put his key in the lock. Justin stands there. Cody goes to him, takes out the gun, cocks it, offers it to Justin with a hard cold stare. "Do it". A beat, then Justin takes the gun, points it at Hobbs. Then RAGES with the same anger and intensity as Cody did when he spoke that night at the Gay and Lesbian Center.

I'm sorry

JUSTIN

DON'T! FUCK! WITH! ME!

Surprised, Hobbs turns around. Even more surprised, he finds himself facing the gun in Justin's shaking right hand, which Justin steadies with his left, just like Cody showed him.

CHRIS

(nervous laugh)

That a cap pistol?

Justin cocks it.

JUSTIN

That's right.

CHRIS

(sensing now it's not)

Hey. C'mon, man. Take it easy.

JUSTIN

Get on your knees.

CHRIS

What the fuck are you --?

CODY

Do what he says!

JUSTIN

I SAID GET ON YOUR KNEES!

CHRIS

Okay, okay --

(falls to his knees)

There. See? You scared me. Now put
the gun away --

Instead, Justin swiftly puts the gun to Hobbs' head.

JUSTIN

First say I'm sorry. SAY IT!

CHRIS

I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

A long, tense beat as they wait, expectantly for what Justin's going to do. Finally -- finally -- Justin pulls the gun out of Chris's mouth. Chris gasps rapidly, for air -- and his heartbeat.

JUSTIN

Justin clicks the gun to safe, lowers it.

CHRIS

For bashing you. What are you doing? You can't stop now!

JUSTIN

Justin doesn't answer. For causing you brain damage and permanent injury.

CHRIS

For causing you brain damage and permanent injury.

(CONTINUED)

Justin rams the gun into Hobbs' mouth.

JUSTIN

Now suck this.

CODY

That's it! Fuck, yeah!

JUSTIN

Go on. Suck it! SUCK IT!

CODY

This is beautiful, man! This is what you've been wanting to do, all this time!

Justin stares into Hobbs' terrified eyes. Finally: *

JUSTIN

Now you know what it feels like. The fear faggots feel. All their lives. Walking down the street. Holding hands. Because of assholes like you! And you know what?
(beat, calmly)
We're tired of it.

A long, tense beat as they wait, expectantly for what Justin's going to do. Finally -- finally -- Justin pulls the gun out of Chris's mouth. Chris gasps rapidly, for air -- and his heartbeat.

Justin clicks the gun to safe, lowers it.

CODY

What the fuck are you doing? You can't stop now!

Justin doesn't answer.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: you're too afraid. You're all cowards and they know it! You could've ended it! 26

Justin keeps walking. Fade to black. Cody screams into the dark:

JUSTIN

(to Hobbs)

Get up! CODY (cont'd)

Hobbs does as he's told, breathing hard. Unable to speak.

get! You all do! JUSTIN (cont'd)

Go inside. THE END

Hobbs, his hand shaking now like Justin's, struggles to get the key in the lock. *

CODY

(furious)

You can't let him go!

JUSTIN

(to Hobbs)

And I wouldn't call the police. You don't want to have to tell them a couple of faggots made you shit your pants.

Hobbs looks at Justin, then goes in, closes the door. Cody turns on Justin.

CODY

You coward. You fucking coward! You let him get away!

Justin calmly hands the gun back to Cody.

CODY (cont'd)

You had him! You could've had him! But you were too chicken shit!

Justin doesn't answer him. He turns, walks away. Cody SCREAMS after him:

CODY (cont'd)

You're like all the other faggots -- you're too afraid! You're all cowards and they know it! You could've ended it! *

Justin keeps walking. Fade to black. Cody screams into the dark: *

CODY (cont'd)

Faggot! You're no different than the rest of them. You deserve what you get! You all do! *

THE END