

queer as folk

EPISODE 406

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queerasfolk

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CAST AND CREW:

Episode 406 contains especially sensitive story material. In an effort to always keep the show fresh for our audience, please make best efforts to prevent this information from getting into public circulation. Please be particularly careful with your scripts and sides.

Thank you.

queer as folk

EPISODE 406

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
BLAKE WYZECKI.....Dean Armstrong
HUNTER.....Harris Allan
and as
DEBBIE NOVOTNY.....Sharon Gless

GUEST CAST

CYNTHIA	JEROME
RODNEY	MIRANDA
SIDNEY BLOOM	SHANE
SAM AUERBACH	CLIENT
BETTY *	GYM BUNNY *

FADE IN:

1 INT. KINNETIK - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

1

Welcome to the Kinnetik launch party. BRIAN strolls the renovated bath-house, working the former orgy room (now the conference room) in a way he never worked it before, shaking hands instead of dicks, charming the pants (and skirts) off CLIENTS instead of towels.

CLIENT

That new campaign you came up with for us is a stroke of genius.

BRIAN

Thanks, Charlie. I couldn't agree with you more.

The client laughs, as a couple of other SUITS stop to congratulate Brian. LINDSAY, passing by, whispers in his ear:

LINDSAY

So these are the people who make you rich.

BRIAN

God love 'em.

Brian hands Lindsay a check, whispers:

BRIAN (cont'd)

Here's your cut of the action.

She looks at it, shocked. Then at him, even more shocked.

BRIAN (cont'd)

The Concerned Citizens for the Truth would like to thank the citizens of Liberty Avenue for their generous support.

LINDSAY

Brian, it was a gift -- a way of saying thank you.

BRIAN

Now it's my turn. Besides, you know me. I'd only blow it on booze, debauchery and the Armani Spring Collection.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

Well, in that case --

She gives him a kiss as we RAMP to MELANIE and TED.

MELANIE

Case closed! Jeanette and Anna have their son back, an unfair decision has been overturned.

TED

Congratulations, Mel.

MELANIE

I owe it all to you.

TED

Me --?

MELANIE

For reminding me to have the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to accept the things I can't.

TED

I'm still working on that myself.

Ted looks over to see EMMETT laughing it up with DEBBIE and JUSTIN.

EMMETT

I tried to make it work, but living alone was -- too fucking lonely.

DEBBIE

And too lonely fucking -- right, Em?

EMMETT

Now she's living in sin.

DEBBIE

Or at least across the hall from it!

JUSTIN

Just make sure you put the toilet seat down. Deb gets a little touchy.

DEBBIE

'Specially at two in the morning. But I'd rather fall in than put up with that ingrate I used to live with.

(CONTINUED)

She fires a look-that-could-kill over to VIC, who stands with BEN and MICHAEL and RODNEY. *

VIC

The ingratitude of those publishers,
rejecting your second novel.

BEN

When it comes to the bottom line,
there's no such thing as loyalty.

MICHAEL

You'll find another publisher.

Tap, tap, tap! Brian taps his water glass with a knife,
waits for silence, then addresses the crowd.

BRIAN

I'd like to thank my clients, my
employees and my friends for being here
tonight to help launch Kinnetik. It
hasn't been easy. They said the market
was shrinking. That it's the wrong
time to start a new agency. Well I
say, don't believe a fucking word.
Especially in advertising.

The crowd laughs, then gives him a rousing ovation. The
Client leans over to Debbie, who beams proudly.

CLIENT

The guy's got balls!

DEBBIE

Hon, you don't know the half of 'em.

CUT TO:

2 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

2

Vic and Rodney sit in a booth. Debbie whizzes by them --
back and forth and back and forth. Vic tries, in vain, to
get her attention.

VIC

Sis --? Sis --? Waitress!

Finally, Debbie turns to BETTY the other waitress. *

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE

Betty, hon, you mind taking table five?
I'm busy.

BETTY

Sure, Deb --
(to Vic and Rodney)
What can I get for you gents?

VIC

My fucking sister!

Just then, Michael rushes in, runs over to Justin, who's bussing a table.

MICHAEL

Justin! Check this out!

JUSTIN

What is it?

MICHAEL

An e-mail. And look who it's from!

JUSTIN

Brett Keller -- the director? *

MICHAEL

"Ratman 2", "Pharmacy Cowboy", "V-Men" -
- he says he's a big fan of Rage. *

JUSTIN

That's nice.

MICHAEL

Especially the part where he says he
wants to make it into a movie.

JUSTIN

Are you serious? A movie --?

As Debbie passes:

DEBBIE

A movie? Somebody making a movie?

MICHAEL

Brett Keller would like to --
(reading directly from the e-
mail)

(MORE) *

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

"-- float the possibility of turning your brilliant comic book into a live-action feature".

DEBBIE

Oh my God, Michael! Didn't I always tell you you'd be rich and famous? I can't breathe --!

JUSTIN

Easy, Deb --

MICHAEL

Sit down, Ma --

JUSTIN

Betty, could you bring some water --?

VIC

(rushing over)

Are you all right, Sis?

DEBBIE

(recovering immediately)

I'm perfectly fine. No need to concern yourself.

MICHAEL

(to Vic)

Brett Keller wants to make a movie out of Rage.

VIC

Well, congratulations, you two. When's the premiere?

DEBBIE

He's taking his mother. You can rent it at Blockbuster's!

She heads off to the pick-up window. Michael and Vic exchange a look, then Michael follows his mother.

MICHAEL

Ma, when're you going to let up on Uncle Vic?

DEBBIE

I don't care to discuss my brother.

(snapping to the cook)

I'm still waiting on that side of slaw!

MICHAEL

Just because he didn't invite you to his dinner party --

DEBBIE

It's more than that. He obviously doesn't want me around.

MICHAEL

You know that's not true. He has his own life now -- but that doesn't mean he loves you any the less.

Debbie looks away, hurt.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Hey. Remember what you always told me -
- that blood is thicker than marinara sauce?

He gives her a kiss, leaves. As she looks over at Vic in the booth:

CUT TO:

3 INT. SIDNEY BLOOM GALLERY - DAY

3

START ON the front page of the Living Section of the major Pittsburgh paper: "Penn Plaza Gets a World Class Brush-up" with a color photograph of SAM AUERBACH on a scaffold, a paintbrush in his hand. Lindsay's reading the article with intense interest.

SIDNEY (V.O.)

I thought we might arrange the landscapes according to season --

PULL BACK to REVEAL LINDSAY, lost in the article.

SIDNEY (cont'd)

Lindsay --?

LINDSAY

(looking up)

Huh --? Oh, sorry, Sidney --

SIDNEY

I said I was thinking we could arrange the landscapes according to season.

LINDSAY

Sure. Great idea.

(CONTINUED)

SIDNEY

(re: the newspaper)

What's so interesting -- your horoscope?

LINDSAY

(showing him)

The new Auerbach mural.

SIDNEY

I stopped by yesterday to take a peek. Pretty amazing.

LINDSAY

I've always loved his work. How he's always evolving, always challenging himself.

(a beat, then)

Sidney, what would you think of doing an exhibit of his work in conjunction with the mural?

SIDNEY

It'd be a dream come true.

(beat)

Except that it won't. His New York rep already told the Carnegie Gallery no.

LINDSAY

There's no harm asking him ourselves. My horoscope says "Take a Chance".

SIDNEY

(taking the paper away)

I suggest we get our head out of the stars and get back down to earth. Now, I think we should divide the landscapes into seasons --

CUT TO:

4 INT. KINNETIK - DAY

4

Brian's on the move through the old bathhouse, reading a fax, followed by trusty CYNTHIA. Justin tries to keep up.

JUSTIN

He wants to make Rage into a movie!

CYNTHIA

Brett Keller -- that's fantastic!

*

(CONTINUED)

Brian ignores the conversation. *

BRIAN
(to Cynthia)
Are these rates firm? *

CYNTHIA
As my abs.
(to Justin)
I bought one of those machines -- *

JUSTIN
Did you hear what I said? *

BRIAN
He wants to make it into a movie.
(back to Cynthia)
Tell him we'll book the next three
issues if he takes fifteen percent off. *

JUSTIN
Well aren't you proud of me? I'm going
to be rich! *

BRIAN
Good. Now you'll be able to pay me
back the thousands I spent on your
aborted education. *

JUSTIN
Who needs school when I have a picture
deal? *

BRIAN
You still won't have a degree. What
was that finishing school you went to
again, Cynthia? *

CYNTHIA
Yale. Pre-law. Top of my class. *

JUSTIN
All so she can book your haircuts. *

CYNTHIA
Friday at four. *

JUSTIN
I've already got an idea for the first
feature -- assuming of course there'll
be numerous sequels. *

(MORE) *

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

JUSTIN (cont'd)

J.T. gets even with his bashers, then goes to Hollywood and becomes a star.

BRIAN

Wow! Where'd you get that brainstorm?

JUSTIN

Let's go to Babylon later and celebrate!

BRIAN

Sorry. School night.

(to Cynthia)

When's the deadline on this run?

CYNTHIA

Noon tomorrow.

Brian looks up, sees Justin has given up, is walking away. A beat, then he calls:

BRIAN

Hey, Spielberg --!

Justin turns back.

BRIAN (cont'd)

One drink.

CUT TO:

5 EXT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - DAY

5

Emmett is painting the front door a bright, fiery red. Debbie comes out with a mug of cocoa.

DEBBIE

Here ya go, honey. I put some of those miniature marshmallows on top.

EMMETT

I love miniature marshmallows!

(confiding a secret)

I've always thought of them as angel's balls.

DEBBIE

Glad to know they have 'em.

(then)

That is one fuckin' red door.

EMMETT

It's not "Fuckin' Red", it's "Jungle Red".

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT (cont'd)

And since you're the most colorful person on the block, I figured why not have a door to match?

They share a laugh, as Ted comes up the walk.

DEBBIE

Ted --!

TED

Hi, Deb --

Emmett is cool, goes back to his painting.

DEBBIE

Can I get you some cocoa?

TED

Uh -- no, thanks -- I'm not staying.

Debbie senses the tension between them.

DEBBIE

Too bad. Well, if you change your mind, I've got a fresh bag of angel's balls.

As Ted offers a curious look, Debbie high-tails it into the house, leaving them alone.

EMMETT

(after a beat)

Well aren't you going to make some caustic remark?

TED

About what?

EMMETT

My moving in with Debbie? "Now Emmett has his own personal faghag!"

TED

I think it's a great idea. Living alone would've driven you nuts. And I'm sure Deb enjoys having a new roomie. So all in all, I'd say it's an ideal arrangement.

EMMETT

Almost as perfect as your working for Brian.

(CONTINUED)

TED

I told him he's betting on a loser --
but it wouldn't be the first time a
long-shot came from behind.

EMMETT

We'll call you Seabiscuit.

He goes back to painting. Ted clears his throat.

TED

As part of my recovery, I'm trying to
make amends for my behavior. So I've
written letters apologizing to everyone
-- Michael and Ben, Brian, Mel and Linz
and --

(this is difficult)

-- you.

EMMETT

Last, as always.

TED

Dammit, Emmett -- you know you're not
last. Or least. *

He hands Emmett a letter, who stares at it for a beat.

EMMETT

Well, this is very -- admirable.
Admitting to your mistakes. Did
everyone forgive you?

TED

So far.

EMMETT

That must make you feel better.

TED

I can't tell you how relieved I am.

EMMETT

Good for you.

(beat)

But what will reading this letter do
for me? Will it take away all the
damage that's been done -- all the pain
that's been inflicted? Will it make up
for feeling helpless, inadequate?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

EMMETT (cont'd)

Erase all those memories of you,
descending into your addiction --
trying to take me down with you?
(a beat)

Well, I'm sorry, Teddy.
(thrusting the letter back in
his hand)

You'll just have to get your feel-good
fix from someone else.

He goes into the house, leaving Ted standing there with the
letter in his hand.

CUT TO:

6 INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

6

CLOSE-UP OF A DVD BOX atop the TV set: "V MEN: A Brett Keller
film". Michael and Hunter sit on the sofa watching it. Ben
is writing. The SCREAMS and EXPLOSIONS from the screen
occasionally cause him to look up. *

MICHAEL

First I'll pay off my mother's house,
then I'll put a down payment on a house
for us. Then I'll buy a car --

HUNTER

A Porsche Carrera!

MICHAEL

It's only a two-seater.

HUNTER

Don't worry, we'll let you ride in it
once in awhile -- right, Ben?

BEN

Right, pal. Although I don't know
which fantasy's crazier -- the one
you're watching or the one you're
telling yourselves.

MICHAEL

Why's it crazy?

BEN

Just because he says he wants to make
it into a movie doesn't mean it'll ever
see the light of day --

HUNTER

This part's so cool!

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL

I don't know why not.

HUNTER

I can just see Rage doing something like that!

BEN

Those guys talk big -- but we'll see if they deliver.

HUNTER

Who's going to play Rage?

MICHAEL

Tom Cruise? Brad Pitt?

HUNTER

Those geezers? You gotta get Ashton Kutcher.

Ben puts his writing aside for the night, starts for the bedroom.

MICHAEL

Where're you going?

BEN

Some of us non-Hollywood types have a faculty meeting in the morning.

MICHAEL

Come on -- stay and watch for a few minutes.

(seductively)

I'll sit on your lap.

BEN

"A Brett Keller Film" isn't my thing. *

MICHAEL

"V MEN" was one of the top grossers of last year! *

BEN

All that proves is there're a lot of people out there who don't mind settling for mindless entertainment.

HUNTER

That's why I like it!

(CONTINUED)

BEN

Don't come to bed too late.

Ben goes off to the bedroom. As Michael watches him go, an EXPLOSION happens on screen.

HUNTER

Fuckin' awesome!

CUT TO:

7 INT. PENN PLAZA LOBBY - DAY

7

Raincoat drenched from the pouring rain, hair matted to her head, Lindsay enters looking like a drowned Afghan Hound. The lobby buzzes with activity, as MINIONS circulate among tables of diagrams and stacks of painting supplies. Along one wall, a huge scaffolding flanks a dazzling work in progress. Lindsay pauses to gaze at it, then:

LINDSAY

Excuse me, I'm looking for Mr. Auerbach

--

But the minions are either too busy or too fabulous to help. Finally, she lands on JEROME, a frazzled assistant mixing paint.

LINDSAY (cont'd)

Excuse me, is Sam Auerbach here --?

Before he can respond, a VOICE booms from above:

AUERBACH (V.O.)

You call this a bagel?

JEROME

You might say His presence is everywhere.

Lindsay looks up the scaffolding, sees SAM AUERBACH looking down from his heaven.

AUERBACH

A lox wouldn't be caught dead on this!

He rains a plague of bagels down on them. Lindsay ducks a few.

JEROME

Sorry, Sam.
(to Lindsay)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

JEROME (cont'd)

If I were you, I'd flee his wrath as fast as you can. *

AUERBACH

Somebody go find me a real bagel. And a shmear! *

JEROME

I'm on it, Sam!
(to Lindsay)
Gotta run! *

As he dashes off, Sam comes down from the scaffolding like Moses from the Mountain, bitching to himself and anyone else in ear-shot: *

AUERBACH

I don't know how the hell Andy lived in this godforsaken burg -- but I sure as hell know why he left. *

LINDSAY

(seizing her chance)
Mr. Auerbach --? *

AUERBACH

Who are you? *

LINDSAY

My name is Lindsay Peterson --

AUERBACH

I need this paint mixed. Where the fuck's Jerome? *

LINDSAY

You just sent him out for bagels.
(then) *

Mr. Auerbach, I'm a tremendous fan of your work. I think you're probably the most brilliant --

AUERBACH

I know. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to pee like a son-of-a-bitch.

LINDSAY

(nothing if not persistent)
I'll speak quickly.

He stops. Scowls.

(CONTINUED)

AUERBACH
I'll try to hold it.

LINDSAY
Thank you. I'm from the Sidney Bloom
Gallery and we were hoping we might
interest you in a show of your recent
works, including perhaps some drawings
for the mural --

AUERBACH
Take it up with my agent.

LINDSAY
I feel the personal touch is always the
best.

Just then, MIRANDA, a young, sexy assistant in too-tight
jeans walks by.

AUERBACH
(suddenly, sweetness and light)
Miranda, honey -- would you mind taking
these brushes up there?

MIRANDA
Sure, Sam.

He pats her well-packed behind, then watches, admiringly, as
she ascends the scaffolding.

AUERBACH
Now that's what I call the personal
touch.

As Lindsay watches -- appalled:

CUT TO:

8 SCENE MOVED AND RENUMBERED (#10A)

8

8A EXT. CHURCH STEPS AND SIDEWALK - DAY

8A

Ted and BLAKE exit the church to walk through a CROWD of
people, all of them smoking. Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous -
- after the meeting.

TED
If I have to listen to Moaning Mona cry
once more about how much she misses her
pills, I'll shove a goddamn Percaset
down her throat myself.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE

There's a lesson in every story.

TED

And the lesson for today was: you can be a hopeless addict, you can destroy your life and the lives of everyone around you -- but don't bore your audience!

BLAKE

Just keep coming.

TED

I know, I know --

BLAKE

Mona'll work her steps and you work yours.

Ted stops.

TED

Except I seem to have forgotten where my steps are leading me.

BLAKE

Sobriety. Wholeness.

TED

I don't mean that.

(pulling out the letter to Emmett)

If what Emmett said was true -- that the only reason I'm writing these is so everybody'll forgive me and I can feel good about myself -- then that's really no different than the way I was using everyone before. To get what I want. In which case he was right not to accept it.

BLAKE

Look, I know it was upsetting -- that the person you most wanted to hear you refused to listen. But you're not responsible for his reaction.

And right now, Ted's not in the mood to listen, either.

(CONTINUED)

TED

Just spare me the A.A. bullshit, would you?

BLAKE

You offered him your truth.

TED

(sarcastic)

"My truth" --

BLAKE

That's all that matters.

TED

Well if that's all that matters, how come you never offered me your "truth"?

Caught up short by Ted's question, Blake has no answer.

TED (cont'd)

You know, I think I'll skip coffee.
See ya.

Ted walks off -- flipping Emmett's letter into a trash basket he passes. As Blake watches him go:

CUT TO:

9 INT. VIC AND RODNEY'S APARTMENT - DAY

9

We find Debbie and Vic in the middle of a bear hug.

VIC

Sis, I'm so glad you came --!

DEBBIE

I guess I kinda overreacted the other night. But you know me --

VIC

Queen of the Drama Queens!

They laugh together.

VIC (cont'd)

So how about a piece of kugelhof? I just baked it.

DEBBIE

That's what I miss. The smell of your kugelhof.

(CONTINUED)

VIC

I baked an extra one for you.

(then)

I'm sorry if you were hurt, Sis. You know that's the last thing I'd ever want to do --

DEBBIE

I know, baby --

VIC

It's just that -- I'm entitled to my own life.

DEBBIE

Who said you weren't --?

VIC

'Specially after all it took for me to get it. *

DEBBIE

(laughs)

You and me both!

VIC

So then let's be happy that we each finally have our own lives. *

DEBBIE

(looking around)

You certainly do. A sweet little apartment, a boyfriend -- *

VIC

Life partner.

She stands -- or sits -- corrected. *

DEBBIE

Life partner.

VIC

It's a miracle, all right.

Beat. *

DEBBIE *

Of course, it takes a miracle worker to make a miracle happen. And I'm not just referring to the Good Lord above.

(CONTINUED)

VIC

(tolerating her) *
I know, Sis, I know -- *
(then, quickly) *
How about a piece of kugelhof --? *

DEBBIE

I'm talking about sheer will. Hard *
work. Sacrifice. Lots of sacrifice. *
Like nursing you myself when your *
health insurance ran out. Cleaning up *
your vomit, wiping your ass --

VIC

Jesus Christ. If I have to hear about *
you wiping my ass one more time --

DEBBIE

If I had to do it, you can fuckin' hear *
about it. And who else would've done *
it if it weren't for me? If I hadn't *
taken you in, where would you have *
gone? What would've happened to you? *
We both know the answer to that one. *
So, just don't you forget who put their *
life on hold, so that you could one day *
live yours.

VIC

I'll never forget. And I'll always be *
grateful. *
(beat) *
But I never asked or expected you to *
sacrifice your life.

DEBBIE

Well how else was it gonna happen? By *
magic? I'd be damned if I was gonna *
let that disease get you! Not while I *
had an ounce of strength left! Why *
else do you think I did it?

VIC

"I thought you did it for me, Mama".

She looks at him for a long beat. Finally:

DEBBIE

What the hell's that supposed to mean? *

He doesn't say anything. *

(CONTINUED)

DEBBIE (cont'd)

You think I did it for me?

VIC

If it gave you a sense of purpose -- a way to feel good about yourself --

DEBBIE

Why you fucking little ingrate!

VIC

Look, this is my house! You don't talk to me that way!

DEBBIE

Your house. Well, aren't you suddenly high and mighty. But I'm not surprised. You took what you needed, and the first chance you got it was "so long, sucker!"

VIC

That's not true!

DEBBIE

The hell it's not! You used me!

VIC

And you used me.

(beat)

I think you'd better leave.

DEBBIE

Don't bother asking -- I'm already goin'!

VIC

And don't bother coming back until you say you're sorry.

DEBBIE

Don't worry, I'm never coming back. I don't give a shit if I ever see you again. And you want an apology? Here's my apology. Fuck you, little brother. Fuck you!

*
*
*

And she grabs her coat and slams out.

CUT TO:

10A INT. BABYLON - NIGHT

10A

While glistening men dance to the music, Brian and Justin order drinks at the bar and survey tonight's offerings.

BRIAN

You know the problem with our extracurricular one-fuck-only policy?

JUSTIN

Is it that after a while, you start asking yourself, "Am I doing this because I want to do it, or because I need to do it? And if I need to do it, is it to prove to myself that I'm still young and attractive? Or is it that I feel unworthy of being loved?"

*
*
*
*

BRIAN

Or maybe it's that I've had every fuckable guy in this city.

*

JUSTIN

What about him?

*

Brian SEES a hot hunk (SHANE, 35) on the dance floor, eyeing him -- or is it Justin? -- invitingly.

*
*

BRIAN

Ah, the scent of fresh meat. The thrill of the kill.

*
*

He starts over, but Justin stops him.

*

JUSTIN

Too bad, Simba, it's me he's checking out.

*

BRIAN

In your dreams.

JUSTIN

Want to bet?

*

BRIAN

What're the stakes?

Justin considers for a moment, then:

*

JUSTIN

If I win, you take me on an all-expense paid trip to Ibeeza.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

It's pronounced Ibeetha. And it's a long way to go for a bathhouse with sand. *

JUSTIN

And if you win --?

BRIAN

If I win -- you go back to school.

JUSTIN

No fucking way!

BRIAN

(shrugs)

Your call.

He starts toward the dance floor. *

JUSTIN

Wait!

(beat)

All right. You're on. 'Cause I know, he was checking me --

He turns to look for Shane, but --

JUSTIN (cont'd)

Shit! He's gone!

Indeed, he is.

BRIAN

He who hesitates -- doesn't get laid.

As they toss back their drinks:

CUT TO:

11 INT. LINDSAY AND MELANIE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

11

Lindsay's getting ready for bed -- throwing off her shoes, unpinning her hair, getting out of her clothes. Melanie's already in bed, reading.

LINDSAY

The man is a pig -- an absolute pig!

MELANIE

You know what they say about meeting your heroes.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

Whoever said it must've met him.
(she continues to undress)
If I wasn't already a dyke, he'd've
sent me diving for the nearest muff!

MELANIE

And it's right here, baby.

They laugh, then Lindsay looks at herself in the mirror.

LINDSAY

You'd say I was -- attractive --
wouldn't you?

MELANIE

(teasing)
I have to shield my eyes every time you
walk in the room.

LINDSAY

Well, he looked through me. As if I
was invisible! But you should've seen
the way he went after his tramp
assistant.

MELANIE

Is that what you were wearing?

LINDSAY

And my wool coat.

MELANIE

And what was the tramp assistant
wearing?

LINDSAY

Did you ever have a Disco Barbie?

MELANIE

You think I only played with G.I. Joe?
(then)
Yes, even I, Raging Bull, was
indoctrinated at an early age by the
straight man's ideal of feminine
perfection.

LINDSAY

Well, that's what she was wearing.

(CONTINUED)

MELANIE

There's your answer.

Lindsay slips into bed with Melanie.

LINDSAY

You expect me to walk around in a spandex dish towel and a couple of post-its? *

MELANIE

I'm merely giving you the same advice you gave me when Larry Jacobs took over the Arlen versus Arlen case. "It isn't right. It isn't fair. It just is".

LINDSAY

Remind me to keep my big mouth shut.

MELANIE

Look, he's a man and you're a woman. Gay, straight -- it doesn't matter. We all have our powers of persuasion. So if you want something out of him, you've got to play his game -- 'cause he sure as hell ain't gonna play yours. *

CUT TO:

12 INT. RED CAPE COMICS - DAY

12 *

Justin's checking the e-mail on Michael's computer.

JUSTIN

(frustrated)

Shit.

Ben, looking through comics, looks up.

BEN

Problem?

JUSTIN

Just waiting for an answer to an e-mail.

BEN

Must be pretty important.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

Michael and I wrote back to Brett Keller -- said we're interested in his offer. *

BEN

Oh. Well, I'm sure big-time directors have hundreds of calls and e-mails to answer. He'll get back to you when he can.

(beat)

That is, if he's still interested.

JUSTIN

Why wouldn't he be?

BEN

You know how it is out in Hollywood. They're hot on something one minute and cold on it the next.

JUSTIN

I'm sure he meant it.

BEN

I'm sure you're right.

(beat)

But what if he turns it into a piece of shit?

JUSTIN

We won't let him.

BEN

Once you sell it, he can do whatever he wants. Make Rage -- straight.

Just then, Michael enters from upstairs with a box of comic books.

BEN (cont'd)

Ready for lunch?

JUSTIN

We need to get a lawyer.

MICHAEL

For what?

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

Keller could turn Rage into a singing warthog and there's nothing we can do about it!

Michael looks over to Ben. Figures it out.

MICHAEL

What have you been telling him?

BEN

To be careful, that's all.

MICHAEL

That's not going to happen. He told us he loves Rage, just the way he is.

JUSTIN

How do we know he's not just saying that?

MICHAEL

Thank you, Ben. Thank you very much. Now if you don't mind, I'd appreciate it if you'd just butt out.

Ben looks at him for a beat, then:

BEN

Happy to.

And with that he walks out the door.

CUT TO:

13 EXT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - DAY

13

Emmett has finished painting the front door and is now beautifying the front of Debbie's house in some other way -- planting shrubs, hanging flower baskets -- when Blake arrives.

BLAKE

Looks nice.

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT

(less than thrilled to see him)
We faeries have a special gift for
reclaiming anything -- no matter how
common -- and transforming it into
something magical.

(beat)

Well, almost anything.

A beat, then Blake produces Ted's letter.

BLAKE

I believe this is yours.

Emmett recognizes Ted's letter.

EMMETT

I thought I ditched that.

BLAKE

You did. But as you said, we faeries
have a gift for reclaiming anything.

EMMETT

Look, I already told Ted, I think it's
great he's doing his steps and writing
his letters -- but it's about him, not
me.

BLAKE

That's where you're wrong. It's about
you helping him -- and yourself -- to
move on.

EMMETT

(gesturing to his new
surroundings)
I've already "moved on", thank you.
(he looks at Blake)
And so has Teddy -- without any help --
or forgiveness -- from me.

BLAKE

He's not asking for your forgiveness.
(off Emmett's look)
He's asking that you acknowledge his
pain, for having hurt you. After that,
it's up to him to forgive himself.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2)

13

Emmett doesn't answer. Blake places the letter on the front step, or on the porch railing -- somewhere Emmett can see it - then leaves.

CUT TO:

14 INT. RIPT GYM - NIGHT

14 *

Brian and Justin are working out. A GYM BUNNY passes, gives Justin a smile and a piece of paper with his name and number.

JUSTIN

This is the eighth one today.

(pocketing it)

If I'd known what a fleshpot this is, I'd have signed up years ago -- not that I need it. I have the perfect twink physique.

Brian looks over, SEES the elusive Shane, stretching in a corner. Justin's back is to Shane, doesn't see him.

BRIAN

(smiles sweetly)

Then why don't you put it to use?

As soon as Justin goes off to chat up the Bunny, Brian heads straight for Shane, who's doing some verrry int-er-est-ing stretches. Brian watches appreciatively.

BRIAN (cont'd)

Did you just start here?

SHANE

Yeah, I'm new in town.

BRIAN

Score one for Pittsburgh. Name's Brian.

SHANE

Shane.

BRIAN

It's always nice to see a fresh --

(glance downward)

-- face.

Brian gives him a grin. Shane grins back. Meanwhile --

JUSTIN is chatting up the Bunny.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

I'll give you a call -- take it easy.

Just then, he looks over, sees Brian making moves on Shane.

JUSTIN (cont'd)

Shit!

(grabbing the Bunny)

Listen, could you do me a favor?

Back to Brian and Shane.

BRIAN

You know, it's not everyone who can spread their legs like that.

SHANE

I still can't go as far as I'd like.

BRIAN

I'd be happy to help stretch you.

Over walks the Gym Bunny, who whispers something to Shane, who suddenly excuses himself.

SHANE

It's been nice talking to you -- gotta go.

And he's gone, leaving Brian puzzled. Justin appears.

JUSTIN

The man that got away?

BRIAN

I was halfway up his ass.

JUSTIN

He must've heard that nasty rumor -- the one about you having crabs.

BRIAN

Wonder how that happened.

JUSTIN

Get out the sunscreen -- we're going to Ibiza.

BRIAN

Don't ditch your textbooks yet.

CUT TO:

15 INT. PENN PLAZA LOBBY - NIGHT

15

Auerbach's crew is packing to leave for the day when Lindsay - or her glamorous twin -- arrives, carrying a deli bag. It's quite a transformation from the last time. While not quite Disco Barbie, she looks damn sexy. She approaches Auerbach, who's studying some sketches.

LINDSAY
Mr. Auerbach --?

AUERBACH
(not looking up)
Yeah --?

LINDSAY
You wanted a good bagel? Here's a good bagel.
(handing him the bag)
Well, go on -- try one. You screamed loud enough for them.

He gives her a look, reaches in, grabs a bagel, takes a grumpy bite. Not bad.

AUERBACH
These from New York?

LINDSAY
Tell Jerome to go to Solly's. It's the best deli in Pittsburgh.
(knowing he hasn't a clue)
By the way, I'm Lindsay Peterson, from the Sidney Bloom Gallery. We met briefly -- the other day.

AUERBACH
(checking a sketch, annoyed)
This can't be right!

He starts to ascend the scaffolding, bagel in his mouth, leaves Lindsay standing there. Then he stops, turns back.

AUERBACH (cont'd)
Well, you coming?

Damn right! She kicks off her heels, starts her climb, stumbles. Sam grabs her, pulls her up, holds her tight.

AUERBACH (cont'd)
Don't worry, sweetheart -- you're in the best of hands.

(CONTINUED)

He flashes her a wolfish smile. She wriggles out of his grasp, only to be struck by the work of art before her.

LINDSAY

It's -- incredible! A work of monumental importance. Right up there with the Deco Series and the Santa Fe Project --

AUERBACH

Did you bring the bagels?

She passes him the bag.

LINDSAY

Mr. Auerbach --

AUERBACH

Sam.

LINDSAY

Sam. I wish you would reconsider allowing us to do a show that would trace this mural from commission to concept to execution. Using your sketches and notes, we could --

AUERBACH

Give me a hand, would you?

LINDSAY

(after a beat)

Me?

AUERBACH

Here's a brush, some Riata Red Number 9 -- where do they come up with these crazy names?

(he takes her arm, guides it)

Now, use nice even strokes -- that's the way --

LINDSAY

I can't believe I'm actually painting with Sam Auerbach!

AUERBACH

Keep stroking --

As he presses against her.

*

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

What're you doing --?

AUERBACH

I told you -- nice, even strokes.

In a panic, her paint brush goes right across his face.

LINDSAY

Oh my God! I'm so sorry -- but I think you should know, I'm happily married!

AUERBACH

(wiping himself off)

Who's the lucky guy?

LINDSAY

He's not a guy. He's a woman.

AUERBACH

All the better! Call her, we'll have a three-way.

He pulls her close, she pushes him away -- then she bops him right in the nose. He nearly falls off the scaffolding. She grabs him, just in time.

AUERBACH (cont'd)

OW! By dose!

He holds a rag to his nose.

LINDSAY

You're bleeding --!

AUERBACH

It's just some Riata Red Number 9.

(then)

You really must be a dyke with a right hook like that.

LINDSAY

And you're the most repellent man I ever met -- even if you are a genius!

She starts down the scaffolding. He calls to her:

(CONTINUED)

AUERBACH

Hey, what'd you say the name of that deli is again?

CUT TO:

16 EXT. VIC AND RODNEY'S - DAY

16

Michael and Emmett are schlepping boxes overflowing with pots, pans and various kitchen paraphernalia.

EMMETT

(puffing)

Vic's pots and pans have moved more than I have. First to Ted's, then back to your mother's, now here --!

MICHAEL

She said she wanted all of it out of the house before she could count to ten -- "And that includes every fuckin' teaspoon!"

EMMETT

It's scary how well you do her.

MICHAEL

I wish they'd kiss and make up already!

EMMETT

I know what you mean. There's nothing more tedious than one of those interminable feuds.

Michael gives him a look -- then raps on the door. No answer.

MICHAEL

Shit! Don't tell me he's not here.

(then)

Wait -- I've got a key.

Michael unlocks the door. They go into:

16A INT. VIC AND RODNEY'S - DAY

16A

MICHAEL

Uncle Vic --?

Emmett SEES Vic asleep in front of the TV, shushes Michael. *

(CONTINUED)

Speaking softly:

EMMETT
(re: the pots and pans)
So what should we do with this?

MICHAEL
I'd put it all away, but I don't know
where he wants it.

EMMETT
Guess we'd better go wake him up and
ask him.

They go into the living room. Michael goes over to Vic,
gently nudges him. *

MICHAEL
Uncle Vic, your movers are here.

EMMETT
With everything from Debbie's kitchen
except the sink!

But Vic doesn't respond. Michael shakes him again. Still no
response.

MICHAEL
Uncle Vic?
(beat)
Uncle Vic --?

A beat, then Michael slowly withdraws his hand, swallows his
rising panic. As he looks to Emmett:

CUT TO:

16B SCENE OMITTED

16B *

17 INT. LIBERTY DINER - DAY

17 *

Debbie's dashing around the diner, working the crowd. As she
delivers an order: *

DEBBIE
That's two pink plate specials, one
pork chop with mashed potatoes, and a
chicken fried steak, no vegetables.
Only I changed that for you,
sweetheart. Now eat your broccoli!

(CONTINUED)

She rushes to the window, places the order, barks to the cook:

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Where the fuck's that pot pie -- did
you have to go kill the chicken?

She loads up her tray, heads for a table as Michael and
Emmett come in. Emmett hangs back. *

MICHAEL
Mom --?

DEBBIE
I can't talk to you now, sweetheart.

MICHAEL
It's important.

DEBBIE
Can't you see I got my hand's full?
Kiki's out sick, I'm working two
stations at once --

MICHAEL
Mom, please --

DEBBIE
(calling to a table)
Be right with you!
(to Michael)
They're practically growlin' for meat
--!

MICHAEL
Would you put the goddamn tray down?!

Seeing his distress now, she puts the tray down.

DEBBIE
So what's so fuckin' urgent it can't
wait?

MICHAEL
Come sit down.

DEBBIE
I don't have time to sit down. Just
tell me!

Beat.

MICHAEL

It's Uncle Vic.

DEBBIE

What about him?

(with a laugh)

He must've had a shit fit when you showed up with his pots and pans. I hope so, the son-of-a-bitch!

MICHAEL

Mom, Uncle Vic is -- gone.

(beat)

He -- passed away.

Debbie stands there, blinking, hearing, not really comprehending.

DEBBIE

What the hell're you talkin' about?

MICHAEL

We took his stuff over to him and he -- he was there -- in front of the TV --

Michael's struggling hard to hold it together.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

I'm sorry, Mom --

Debbie stares off, not saying anything.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

I called Rodney. The paramedics came, but --

*
*

A beat, then:

DEBBIE

I -- I have to -- my food's getting cold --

She tries to go get her tray, but somehow she can't --

MICHAEL

It's okay, Mom. It can wait.

CUT TO:

18 INT. WOODY'S - NIGHT

18

Justin leans against the bar, hot-looking and looking hotly at Shane, who stands at the other end of the bar having a beer and watching a football game on TV. Justin goes over to him.

JUSTIN
You into football?

SHANE
I hate football.

JUSTIN
Then why're you watching it?

SHANE
So some hot guy'll come over and ask me
if I'm into football.

Justin smiles. Introduces himself.

JUSTIN
Justin.

SHANE
Shane.

They shake.

JUSTIN
I saw you in Babylon the other night.

SHANE
Oh?

JUSTIN
You were cruising the hell out of me.
But you disappeared.

SHANE
One of those emergencies -- couldn't be
helped.

JUSTIN
(closing in)
Lucky for us, we meet again.

Shane takes a pull on his beer, smiles.

SHANE
You Pittsburgh guys sure are friendly.

(CONTINUED)

JUSTIN

It's a small town with a big heart.
Been here long?

SHANE

All of a week. Still living out of
boxes.

JUSTIN

Why don't I help you unpack?

He's about to lead Shane away when Brian comes over, stops
him.

BRIAN

Hold it.

SHANE

Say, aren't you the guy from the gym?

BRIAN

The one with the bad case of crabs.
Fortunately, it's cleared up.

JUSTIN

Too late, I won. You can book our
flight tomorrow.

BRIAN

No one's going anywhere. Bet's off.
(beat)
Vic's dead.

Justin laughs.

JUSTIN

That's re-ally low, Brian. Even for
you.

BRIAN

It's true.

Justin searches Brian's eyes for a beat. Finally:

JUSTIN

Jesus --

CUT TO:

19 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

19

Debbie sits there -- numb -- still in her waitress uniform. Michael, Ben and Hunter are with her, as is Rodney. Emmett's in the kitchen. No one knows what to say or do.

MICHAEL
(finally)
Ma, you want to go upstairs and lie
down?

But she doesn't answer.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
Ma --?

Emmett comes out from the kitchen:

EMMETT
Can I get anybody anything? How about
some tea, Deb?

But Michael signals, "not now".

EMMETT (cont'd)
Rodney?

RODNEY
No, thanks.

Just then, Brian and Justin come in. Justin goes to Debbie, embraces her.

JUSTIN
Deb, I'm so sorry.

Debbie holds him, gratefully.

DEBBIE
Thank you, Sunshine --

Brian takes Michael in his arms, Michael hugs him, clings onto him.

BRIAN
What the fuck happened?

BEN
His heart. The doctor said his
cholesterol was sky-high from the meds
he was taking.

*

(CONTINUED)

He doesn't finish. Shakes his head.

MICHAEL
No warning. Nothing.

Hunter's been listening in:

HUNTER
I thought the meds are supposed to keep
you alive -- not kill you.

BEN
It doesn't always work that way.

Hunter is left to contemplate that scary thought. Rodney
wipes his eyes. Emmett give him a sympathetic squeeze.

RODNEY
We knew it wouldn't be forever. But I
thought -- I thought we'd have more
time than this.

EMMETT
You guys should've been together a lot
longer. It's tragic. *

BRIAN
Hamlet's tragic. Platform shoes are
tragic --

A beat. They all stare at him, shocked.

BRIAN (cont'd)
Vic was on his deathbed four years ago.
This was all gravy -- and he knew it.

A beat. Debbie rouses herself, gets up:

DEBBIE
What did you say?

BRIAN
Going like that. A blink and you're
out. If you ask me, he was fucking
lucky.

She hauls off, smacks him.

DEBBIE
Nobody fucking asked you.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN
(rubbing his cheek)
The truth hurts.

DEBBIE
And who the fuck are you to decide how
long he should've lived?

MICHAEL
Ma, please --! Jesus, Brian --!

DEBBIE
I want this shithead out of my house --
get him out!

As Brian obeys her wishes, and Justin runs out after him:

CUT TO:

20 EXT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

20

Brian exits the (red) front door, Justin following.

JUSTIN
Brian -- wait up!
(stopping him)
She's upset -- just go tell her you're
sorry!

BRIAN
Only one problem. I'm not.

Just then, Melanie and Lindsay hurry up the walk.

MELANIE
We just heard --

LINDSAY
How's Debbie --?

BRIAN
Nothing can keep a good woman down.

He starts to go.

MELANIE
Are you leaving?

BRIAN
Ran out of ice.

Lindsay picks up on something.

(CONTINUED)

LINDSAY

Brian?
(to Justin)
Did something happen?

JUSTIN

Go on in. We'll be there in a minute.

As Mel and Linz go inside:

BRIAN

Not me.

JUSTIN

Where you going?

BRIAN

We have a bet, remember?

JUSTIN

I can't believe you're thinking about
sex at a time like this.

BRIAN

"At a time like this" is exactly when
to think about it -- before you can't.

He gives Justin a hot, hard kiss, then as he walks away:

CUT TO:

21 INT. MICHAEL'S OLD BEDROOM - NIGHT

21

Michael sits on his old bed, his first chance to be alone.
Ben peeks in.

BEN

Here you are.

Michael looks up, sees him.

MICHAEL

Just taking a breather.

BEN

How're you holding up?

MICHAEL

I'm not thinking about me right now.
(beat)
I don't think Ma knows what hit her.

(CONTINUED)

BEN

What Brian said sure didn't help.
Insensitive prick.

MICHAEL

The funny thing is, Vic would probably
have agreed with him. When he came
back, everybody figured he had a few
months to live, tops. You should've
seen what he looked like.

BEN

Not a pretty picture, I'm sure.

MICHAEL

So whatever time he got was a gift.
And he was a lot luckier than most.

BEN

That may be true. But it wasn't
Brian's place to shrug off his death --
especially to your Mom.

MICHAEL

He shrugs off everything. It's who he
is.

BEN

And you defend him. It's who you are.

MICHAEL

Look, I don't need to be told how to
respond or what to feel.

(beat)

Certainly not by you. So if that's why
you came up here --

BEN

It's not.

(beat)

I came to offer my unconditional love
and support. And to let you know if
there's anything I can do --

MICHAEL

There is. You can put everything else
aside, because right now, I don't give
a shit about -- whoever he is -- that
director -- I'm so upset, his name just
flew out of my head. All I care about
is helping my Mom get through this.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

MICHAEL (cont'd)
I just hope I can.

*

CUT TO:

21A INT. TED'S CONDO - NIGHT

21A

Ted, wearing an old flannel nightshirt, answers the door, surprised to find Blake standing there.

*

BLAKE
Did I wake you?

TED
Uh, no -- no! Come in --

Then, embarrassed about his attire:

TED (cont'd)
First I just want you to know I never wear this. But tomorrow's laundry day --

BLAKE
It's okay. You look stunning.

TED
Just come from a meeting?

BLAKE
I did.

TED
Who'd you rescue tonight?

BLAKE
Actually -- me.
(beat)
It was my turn to speak. And what I basically said was that even though I've been clean for over two years, followed the program, tried to be a good counselor --

TED
Better than good -- the best!

BLAKE
(a beat)
I still feel as though I've failed.

TED
That's not true --

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE

It is true. I've failed to make proper
amends to the one person I should've
made them to a long time ago.

TED

(understanding)

If you'd like to write a letter, I have
plenty of stationery.

BLAKE

I don't want to write a letter.

(with difficulty)

What I want to do is -- this.

He leans in, kisses Ted. Ted returns it. The moment they've
avoided for so long is here. They shuck their clothes, wind
up making passionate love.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

*

22 INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - FRONT HALLWAY - NIGHT

22

Emmett is seeing Michael, Ben and Hunter out. Michael
hesitates, holds back.

MICHAEL

Maybe I should stay --

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

EMMETT

No, you go home with Ben and Hunter.
Get some rest. I'm here. Don't worry.

Michael gives him a grateful kiss, Emmett closes the door -- then takes a deep breath, glances toward the top of the stairs.

CUT TO:

22A INT. DEBBIE'S HOUSE - DEBBIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

22A

Later. Debbie lies on the bed, still in her waitress clothes. Emmett taps on the door, comes in, tray in hand.

EMMETT

Everybody's gone.

DEBBIE

Thank God. I just couldn't handle all those hugs and teary goodbyes.

EMMETT

They understand. Brought you my Aunt Lulah's secret sleep potion -- warm milk and honey. Guaranteed to soothe the nerves and send you off to Dreamland.

Debbie looks at him, skeptically.

EMMETT (cont'd)

Well, that and half a Xanax.

DEBBIE

Keep the pill.

EMMETT

It'll help calm you.

DEBBIE

Calm. How can I be calm? After the way I talked to him --

A beat. A difficult confession.

DEBBIE (cont'd)

I said that I never cared if I ever saw him again. My last words to him were "Fuck You".

(CONTINUED)

EMMETT
(trying to dismiss it)
You two were always fighting --

DEBBIE
And we always made up. But not this
time.

As she lies there, inconsolable, and Emmett thinks about what she's just said:

CUT TO:

23 INT. EMMETT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 23

Emmett comes into his room. Sits on the bed for a beat, exhausted. He starts to undress, stops, looks at his coat hanging on the back of the door. He gets up, goes to it, searches in the pocket. He pulls out Ted's letter of amends. He stares at it for a beat, then tears it open. As he sits on the bed, carefully reading every word:

CUT TO:

24 SCENE MOVED AND RENUMBERED (21A) 24

25 INT. BABYLON BACK ROOM - NIGHT 25

Surrounded by Pittsburgh's hottest as they fuck and suck, Brian finishes getting a blow job. The "jobber" comes up for air -- revealing that it's Shane. Brian has a big grin on his face.

SHANE
(off Brian's smile)
Like that?

BRIAN
I always like winning a bet.

SHANE
You've got a great cock.

BRIAN
That's the first time anyone's ever
told me that. Thanks.

SHANE
Although there's something I'd like to
talk to you about.

Shane flips him a business card.

(CONTINUED)

SHANE (cont'd)

Why don't you give me a call?

BRIAN

Sorry, I don't do encores.

SHANE

I'm a doctor.

BRIAN

You want to get paid to probe my prostate?

SHANE

I just thought you should know you've
got a lump on your left testicle. If I
were you, I'd have it looked at.

(beat)

The sooner the better.

Shane leaves. Brian stands there, surrounded by naked bodies
fucking. As he takes in the news:

FADE OUT.

THE END