

your boy.

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INT. LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Punch. Punch. The sound of a railway ticket-puncher. *Punch.*

On this train from Penn Station, we see a typical crowd of COMMUTERS: a hockey fan in an Islanders jersey; a lady whose shirt insists she loves New York; a teen flossing his teeth.

ELECTRONIC TRAIN ANNOUNCEMENT
The next station is: Huntington!

Close on PRESTON HOLLIS: 21, black, shy. That's his stop.

PRESTON
Sorry, sir? Do you mind if I, um --

Preston is stuck between a window and a SNORING BUSINESSMAN, wearing a plus-sized suit and noise-canceling headphones.

PRESTON (CONT'D)
Sorry? Excuse me, sir? Pardon me?

Nada. Rather than disturb this white man's dreams, Preston tries to climb over to the empty seat in front of him. Nope. His leather sneaker gets caught in the overhead storage rack.

EXT. HUNTINGTON STATION PLATFORM - MINUTES LATER

Thud. Now off the train, Preston plops down two bags: a black suitcase reading **PBH III** and a duffel with the **UPenn** crest.

Preston's tight polo and fitted jeans reveal he works on his body. Even still, his handsome eyes lack confidence as he nervously takes out his iPhone to make a casual call:

PRESTON
Hey man, I'm here. You close?
(pause)
No worries. How late...?

EXT. HUNTINGTON POST OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Cut to JAKE LAPORTE: 20, mixed-race, and in a hurry. On this humid June day, sweat drips from his Haitian-American-Jewish Afro to his BUSTA RHYMES concert t-shirt to his baggy shorts.

Though Jake is too overweight to run quickly, his sprint is slowed further by flip-flops and an open Mountain Dew bottle. Drink SPLASHES all over this suburban strip mall parking lot.

JAKE
Fuck! Pour one out for this soda...

Jake arrives at the glass door of his local post office. He pulls the door, pushes it, pulls. It's locked. Fuck.

Then, through the glass, Jake sees a USPS GUY closing up. Jake knocks, waves. The white employee mouths, "Closed!"

JAKE (CONT'D)

C'mon, it's not my fault! There are road closures today! Plus the line at Wetzels Pretzels was mad long!

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - SOME MOMENTS LATER

Still waiting for his ride, Preston enters a filthy public bathroom. There's toilet paper in the urinal. A diaper in the toilet. Over an ad for City University of New York, graffiti has revised its message to read **CHOOSE C.U.N.Y-lingus**.

But Preston has only come there for the mirror. He stares at himself -- deep breath -- and starts to rehearse something:

PRESTON

Hey, man. There's, um, something I've been meaning to tell you...

EXT. POST OFFICE - SAME TIME

Jake continues pleading with the USPS guy through the glass.

JAKE

I can't just get it tomorrow! My friend P.B. is back today, and I haven't seen him in two birthdays!

USPS GUY

Oh, in that case? Still don't care.

JAKE

C'mon. Don't you still have a best friend from childhood? A homie since straight-up kindergarten?

USPS GUY

Nobody still has a best friend from kindergarten. Straight-up go away.

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Back to Preston, still rehearsing to himself:

PRESTON

Turned out there's no non-awkward way to text this. Tried with that dance lady emoji, but...no. So, now that we're both back, I need you to know...that, um...I'm gay.

EXT. POST OFFICE - SAME TIME

Back to Jake, now holding his iPhone up to the glass door as the Marvelettes song "Please Mr. Postman" plays:

THE MARVELETTES (WAILING) (O.S.)

*Please Mr. Postman! Whoa, yeah...!
Ple-hease, Mr. Po-oh-oh-ost-man...!*

Jake makes a cry-baby face as the song plays. The USPS guy, beyond pissed off, inserts earplugs.

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Back to Preston, still rehearsing in the mirror. We CUT among different ways he's practicing coming out.

PRESTON

I'm gay, Jake.
(CUT, playing it cool)
Yeah, I'm gay! It's like, whatever!
(CUT, somber)
This doesn't have to change things between us...
(CUT, Jamaican accent)
Jay-kab! Ya best friend be sexually attracted to uddah men, mohn!

EXT. POST OFFICE - SAME TIME

Back to Jake in the USPS door, trying a more dramatic tactic.

JAKE

Then don't do it for me! Do it for your soul! Surely you wish to be more than what others see...

USPS GUY

This can't be serious.

JAKE

To prove you're more than the bitchy post office guy. Don't we all want that?

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

For in the words of African-American scholar W.E.B. Du Bois:
"It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness. One ever feels his two-ness -- "

USPS GUY

(interrupts, rolling eyes)
Oh, sweet Christ. Get your damn package. Just, please stop talking.

The USPS employee comes to unlock the door. Jake grins.

JAKE

(smug, to himself)
Bore 'em with Du Bois! Every time.

EXT. HUNTINGTON TRAIN STATION - EARLY EVENING

Now in the parking lot, Preston waits with his bags. He looks at his gold watch, uncomfortably patient like always.

Finally, Jake's hand-me-down HATCHBACK CAR screeches up, parking sloppily between two lined spots. Jake rushes out and doesn't miss a beat in taking charge of their greeting.

JAKE

Don't hate me, don't hate me, don't hate me! Lanes were closed and --

Jake shuts up, stunned. He takes a full look at Preston, who knows why Jake is surprised. Preston's bashful about it.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Excuse me! And when in the past year and a half did your body get all Dannon Oikos non-fat-Greek?

PRESTON

Shut up. You've seen me lately.

JAKE

Only on FaceTime! You been calorie counting, Jenny-Craig-Robinson?

PRESTON

You know how dining hall food is.

JAKE

Yes. Delicious. Always. Well, I guess this may not fit now, but...

Jake holds out his USPS PACKAGE, which he's just wrapped poorly on-the-go in PAPER SCRAPS and DUCT TAPE.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Happy 21st. Sorry it's four months late and wrapped in my mom's Jewish community newsletter.

PRESTON

(reading wrapping paper)
"18 Tips for a Kosher Menopause."
You really know me so well.

JAKE

Fuck off. Just open it.

Preston opens the gift: a SWEATSHIRT printed with the poster of 1990s Fox sitcom **LIVING SINGLE**. Queen Latifah and its five other black stars stand together, wacky smiles and all.

PRESTON

Hold up! You got me a *Living Single* custom sweatshirt?

JAKE

Your favorite '90s sitcom-slash-Queen-Latifah-vehicle! I lost a bidding war on eBay but convinced the vendor to make a second one.

Preston now unzips and reaches into his duffle bag.

PRESTON

Well, I know you don't turn 21 for another month. But just so you know I wasn't jacking your ideas...

Preston pulls out an IMPECCABLY-WRAPPED PACKAGE from his bag.

JAKE

No. This isn't. Is this...?

Jake opens his gift: the exact same **LIVING SINGLE** sweatshirt.

JAKE (CONT'D)

MY favorite '90s sitcom-slash-Queen-Latifah-vehicle!

Jake, overwhelmed, gives Preston a big hug. Through their embrace, Jake smiles. Preston still looks panicked.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I missed you, motherfucker.

PRESTON
Missed you too, motherfucker.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - MINUTES LATER

Jake and Preston are driving away from the station.

JAKE
So. I ran into Adam J. when I got back, and he's having an end-of-Junior-year party tonight. Nah worries, I invited both of us.

PRESTON
You want to see that crew? They're still always such dicks to us.

JAKE
Our best other friends? Sure, they make the occasional fat joke...

PRESTON
They called us "Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Double-Dee." They called us "Dunka and Roo." They called us "Boyz Ate Men."

JAKE
Regardless! Since when do we turn down a party where there might be actual girls in attendance?

PRESTON
I just...thought we could maybe catch up tonight. One-on-one.

JAKE
Catch up? We FaceTime all the FaceTime. C'mon! I don't have a summer job yet. This could be my season to get recruited...
(mock sexy voice)
...for love.

Preston shakes his head, annoyed with Jake's joke, and with Jake's typical ability to persuade him to go along.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE PARTY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A Pitbull song blasts as Jake struts excitedly into the house party. Preston, a case of beer in hand, follows tensely.

The party is just okay. There's a beer pong table. Some kids smoking weed. Around a coffee table, three scrawny-yet-cocky white bros hold court. These are ADAM, FINN and NATHANIEL.

JAKE

What's good, amigos?

ADAM

Oh shit! LaPorte actually showed up! Hey yo, Dunka -- where's Roo?

Preston, already hating this night, gives a friendly wave.

NATHANIEL

Wait wait. Is that P.B. Hollis?!
Dude, you got jacked! Did daddy pay
for steroids?

The bros laugh, high-five. Preston folds his arms, trying to casually cover biceps. Jake stands up straighter.

PRESTON

Nah, just started lifting I guess.

NATHANIEL

Started lifting now? Varsity try-outs were six years ago, bro.

FINN

"Pubey Holl-ass and Drake LaPork."
Two of the only black kids in
school. Too fat to play basketball.

ADAM

You mean one-and-a-half black kids.
Even if Jake's double the weight.

Jake's smile fades. ALYSSA KAPLAN, a confidently pretty, zaftig classmate, clocks this and approaches the group.

ALYSSA

Don't be dicks. These guys brought
alcohol, right? So...let's party.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE PARTY - A BIT LATER

Jake and Preston drink by themselves, observing the crowd.

JAKE

You hear the way Alyssa Kaplan was
all, "Let's party?" Felt like there
were hella romantic undertones, no?

PRESTON

A sonnet, really. You're not still mad she ditched you before prom?

JAKE

She had a dormant tapeworm. Shit's unrequited! Let's talk to her.

He waves Alyssa over. She's with ERIN JIMENEZ, a beautiful Latina classmate. Erin talks right to Preston. He's startled.

ERIN

Hey you!

PRESTON

Oh! Hi. Preston...

ERIN

Yeah! P.B. Hollis! And I'm --

PRESTON

Erin Jimenez. I know. Sorry, just surprised you know my name.

ALYSSA

Hollis, I feel like nobody's seen you in years.

JAKE

(inserting himself)

Yeah, well he was abroad in Paris, last summer and fall. My dude was studying that French-ass language.

PRESTON

French.

ERIN

That's amazing! And what are you up to this summer?

PRESTON

I'm, uh, doing an internship for this app called RickShaw?

ALYSSA

RickShaw? Shit! I use that all the time. You in Manhattan for that?

JAKE

Yep. In an apartment his pops owns. With a dope pull-out I'll be party-crashing on pretty much all summer.

Preston looks annoyed by basically everything Jake is saying.

ALYSSA

Sounds nice. I'm stuck at home all summer, working on my art thesis.

JAKE

Oh! Cool, I'm here too, basically. Yeah. Still figuring out what kind of internship I want to choose.

ERIN

Isn't it kinda late to be figuring that out? Like...it's summer.

Silence as Jake tries to figure out how to spin this. Then, from the dining room, a bro cries out.

NATHANIEL

We need four more for flip-cup!

ERIN

We're in!

Erin pulls Preston's arm and runs into the other room. Jake and Alyssa look at each other, shrug, and follow.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE PARTY: DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Round one of flip-cup has just ended. The team on Jake's side of the long table CHEERS. He and Alyssa high-five.

ERIN

Okay, best of three! Alyssa and I are up first this time. P.B. and Jake, you guys finish. Match up!

Players on each side line up, holding beer cups to match with opponents. Jake looks across at Preston and gestures a glance to Alyssa and Erin. He's excited for their prospects tonight.

ALYSSA

Up...down...up...DRINK!

Alyssa and Erin CHUG their beers and start trying to flip the empty cups. Alyssa FLIPS hers successfully, on the first try.

JAKE

Yes Kaplan! Show 'em how we used to do in mothafuckin' Hebrew School!

Alyssa laughs, both with and at Jake. Erin LANDS her cup.

As the game continues, Jake and Alyssa's team struggles, while Preston and Erin's keep making cups. As the line loops back to Preston, he has plenty of time to land the final one.

ERIN

Let's go, Hollis! You got this!

Despite the encouragement, Preston MISSES. Again. And again.

ERIN (CONT'D)

It's okay, Hollis! Just relax!

The rest of his teammates aren't so patient. They shout their frustration at Preston as he keeps missing.

Meanwhile, the other team catches up, leaving the final two cups down to Jake and Preston. Jake versus Preston.

ALYSSA

C'mon, Jake!

Yep. With one try, Jake LANDS his cup. Fists go up. His team CHEERS. Alyssa reaches up for two high-fives.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)

Yes! L'goddamn-CHAIM, bitch!

Jake is loving this attention. Preston, meanwhile, is hating himself. So are his teammates, such as Finn, who shoves him.

FINN

You flip like a woman, Hollis.

ERIN

Don't listen to them! It's a dumb game. And I'm tired of beer anyway.

From the table, Erin pours herself gin. Then, as she grabs orange juice to mix, somebody BUMPS into her. Juice SPILLS all over Preston's shirt. Onlooking bros cry party foul. Preston's annoyed, but he'd never want to make Erin feel bad.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Shit! I am...so...sorry!

PRESTON

Please, don't apologize. It's fine.

ERIN

No! That shirt looks expensive! Here, let's get that stain out!

PRESTON

Really, Erin, it's --

ERIN

Don't let me ruin a designer shirt
just 'cause you want to seem macho.

Erin, tipsy and confident, pulls him to a bathroom. Jake, seeing this, mouths "Nice!" at his reluctant best friend.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE PARTY: BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Erin leads Preston into the bathroom. Locks the door. After wetting a towel under the sink, she starts patting it on Preston's shirt. He isn't comfortable in any way.

ERIN

I'm such an idiot. Doing this to an
Ivy League tech startup genius.

PRESTON

It's only a revenue optimization
internship...

ERIN

I also feel dumb I never knew you
in school. I guess I missed a lot.

PRESTON

A lot of me and Jake recapping *Star
Trek* reruns? You were too popular
for that noise.

ERIN

Oh, I really wasn't popular.

PRESTON

Please. You were volleyball
captain, pretty, had a boyfr --

ERIN

You thought I was pretty?

Erin stops patting the shirt. Looking into his eyes, she rests her hand on his soaked chest. She KISSES him.

Preston is startled. Mid-kiss, he OPENS his eyes. In the mirror, he sees himself. Kissing Erin. And then, suddenly...

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - EARLIER THAT DAY

We (and Preston) see a FLASH of him looking at himself in the mirror of the gross train station bathroom. And then...

A FLASH of the bathroom's graffiti: **CHOOSE C.U.N.Y.-lingus.**

BACK TO:

INT. HOUSE PARTY BATHROOM - SAME TIME

Preston suddenly GAGS, mid-kiss. Erin pulls away, confused.

PRESTON

I'm sorry, Erin! You're great. But I really think you aren't my type.

Erin steps back. Sweetly embarrassed. But deeply sad.

ERIN

Oh. You only like white girls, too.

PRESTON

No! Trust me, that's not --

ERIN

Just, um, soak the shirt before you wash it. Vinegar works great.

Erin, tearing up, runs out of the bathroom.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE PARTY: DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jake and Alyssa have just won another game. The two HIGH-FIVE, now tipsier, flirtier. Preston PACES up to Jake.

PRESTON

Jake. We need to leave.

JAKE

Nah, dude. I'm on a hot streak! You know? A hot streak?

PRESTON

Jake. I. Need. Us. To. Leave.

INT. LONG ISLAND DINER - A BIT LATER

Silence. Jake and Preston are sitting at a booth in an empty 24-hour diner. Both agitated. Neither speaking. Until VAL, a middle-aged waitress, walks over to take their order.

VAL

So, the usual? Two B-L-T's on white -- extra B, hold the toothpicks -- chili cheese onion rings and a couple of coffee milkshakes?

JAKE

Like always. Thanks, Val.

Jake passes her his menu. Preston holds onto his, studying it as he apologetically orders not-off-the-menu.

PRESTON

Um, no milkshake for me tonight.
And actually, instead of a B-L-T,
could I get the, um...number 58?

VAL

58? The "California Body Omelette?"

PRESTON

Um, yeah, that one.

VAL

Wanna sub fries? Or hash browns? It
just comes with plain tomato
slices. Just cold, raw, plain --

PRESTON

It's okay. The tomato slices sound
good. Thanks, Val.

Val walks away, surprised. Jake has an equally baffled look.

JAKE

Okay, dude. Fuck's up with you? Why
are you being so weird tonight?

PRESTON

I'm being weird?

JAKE

Yes. Why'd you make me leave that
party? Were you jealous?

PRESTON

Jealous? Of you?! About what?

JAKE

Maybe flip-cup? Or me and Alyssa
hitting it off? 'Cause it was very
zero-chill how you --

Jake cuts himself off. He's having an "A-HA!" moment.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ohhh! I know! You get a little over-
excited with Erin in that bathroom?

PRESTON

Ew! What? No!

JAKE

Don't be embarrassed, dude! She was high school top five for you! Suddenly she's bathtub-adjacent? Trying to lease you a Hyund-jai?

Jake mimes a jerking off motion. Preston's in on mood for it.

PRESTON

Stop it! I told you I didn't want to go there tonight. I told you I wanted to catch up one-on-one.

JAKE

Whoa! Shit! Alright! What's up?

Silence. Jake waits as Preston struggles to find courage, or words. Too many nervous blood vessels in his chest, and head.

PRESTON

Okay. Um. Huh...

(re-shifting)

Remember...third grade? When we had to do that end-of-year-presentation on, um...our favorite athlete?

JAKE

Yeah? You presented on Mike Piazza. Weird since I always find your Mets fandom middling at best. At! Best!

PRESTON

Sure. Well, I didn't actually wanna do Mike Piazza. I never told you this. But I was originally gonna do my presentation on...Michelle Kwan.

JAKE

...Michelle Kwan?

PRESTON

Yeah, Michelle Kwan. She was, um...an Olympic figure skater.

Jake is every bit as confused as Preston is nervous.

JAKE

That's what you needed to say? What does that have to do with refusing a bathroom finger-job from --

Jake cuts himself off. He's having another "A-HA!" moment.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Hold up. Are you trying to tell me you're...fucking Michelle Kwan?

PRESTON

No! What?! No! Listen. In third grade, when I told Mr. DeLusipi --

JAKE

Think it was pronounced *DeLusheepi!*

PRESTON

Shut up! When I told him that I wanted to present on Michelle Kwan, he said not to. Because if I told anybody my favorite athlete was a figure skater, they'd...they'd think I'm the kind of boy who...wants to kiss other boys.

Preston's heart races. He hopes Jake is getting it. Please.

JAKE

He said that shit? That's fucked! And plus, like, totally false. Duh.

PRESTON

I mean...it was definitely fucked for him to say it. But that, um, doesn't mean he wasn't...not wrong.

JAKE

What does that mean, "that doesn't mean he wasn't...not wrong...?"

PRESTON

Jake? I'm...

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - BEFORE

Quick FLASHES to Preston practicing this word in the mirror.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Gay. (CUT) Gay! (CUT) Gay.

BACK TO:

INT. LONG ISLAND DINER - CONTINUOUS

Back in the diner. Preston's struggle to come out continues:

PRESTON (CONT'D)
 ...trying to tell you...that I'm...

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION BATHROOM - BEFORE

More FLASHES from the vomitous train station bathroom.

PRESTON (CONT'D)
 Homosexual. (CUT) Into guys. (CUT,
 Jamaican accent) Montego Bay, mohn!

BACK TO:

INT. LONG ISLAND DINER - CONTINUOUS

Preston still can't just say it. But he's almost there.

PRESTON (CONT'D)
 ...that I'm...coming out. To you.
 Now. Here.

Yeah. Finally, Jake gets it. He STARES at Jake, dumbfounded.
 And at exactly the wrong moment, Val comes with their food.

VAL
 One B-B-B-L-T with chili onion
 rings, one milkshake, and one crime
 against flavor. Anything else for --

JAKE
 (to Preston)
 You're...?

Jake STARES, stunned. Preston NODS. Val is confused as hell.

VAL
 Just gonna leave these for you.

She leaves. Jake continues to stare. Preston continues to
 stare back, fearing Jake's friendship-ending disapproval.

JAKE
 Fuck. Well this is...this is...
 (and then, suddenly)
 ...AWESOME!

Jake BANGS his hands on the table, elated. He takes a victory
 sip of coffee milkshake -- "Mmm!" Preston SMILES, surprised.

PRESTON
 Wait. Really?

JAKE

Hell yeah, dude! My best friend's gay! I got a gay best friend! Why ain't we celebrating?! YOU GAY!

PRESTON

(laughing, whispering)
Keep it down, okay?

JAKE

Oh! Right. Shit.
(now whispering)
I got me a gay-ass best friend!

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake and Preston sit side-by-side on the swing set in a public playground, another old haunt.

JAKE

So, have you hooked up with guys?
Like, at school?

PRESTON

School? Definitely not. But when I was abroad, I went to a gay bar. By myself, just to see. And one night, a guy invited me to his apartment.

JAKE

So you went? And...slept with him?

PRESTON

Not with. Next to. But we made out, a lot. And it just felt, like: Oh. Right. I am super not into women.

Jake sighs. Happy for Preston, but still in disbelief.

JAKE

And who all have you told?

PRESTON

I guess...that guy? And now you.

JAKE

Really? Nobody else?

PRESTON

Who else would I tell? You're the first person I tell everything to.

JAKE

Well shit. That's the sweetest thing a virgin has ever said to me.

PRESTON

Shut up...

Preston shoves Jake's swing.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake and Preston pull up next to the Hollis family's home, an upscale mini-mansion in a new-money suburban neighborhood.

JAKE

So. You gonna tell your parents?

PRESTON

Junior and Clarissa? They don't need any more drama until my sister's done planning her wedding.

JAKE

Mmm. The Hollis family do love yelling at florists.

PRESTON

Anyway. Thanks again, man. For being cool...about all of this.

JAKE

Dude. Like you said: this doesn't change anything between us. And hey -- now that you're out, and in the city this summer, maybe we can both get recruited...

(mock sexy voice)

...for love.

Preston laughs at this dumb joke he detests.

PRESTON

Fuck off. You're the best. But seriously, fucking hate you.

EXT. HOLLIS FAMILY HOME - CONTINUOUS

Preston, now outside, walks his bags to the house. From a rolled-down car window...

JAKE

Recruited for looooooove!

Preston cackles as Jake rolls up the windows and drives off.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - A BIT LATER

Jake enters the kitchen of his mom's lower-middle-class home. He throws keys on a counter, where bins are labeled **INCOMING** and **OUTGOING**. His cat pushes a mail envelope off the counter.

JAKE

Sheena, no! You don't get mail.
You're illiterate.

He opens the fridge. On a TACO BELL bag, there's a note:
"Jakey, Did you eat? If not, I got an extra Chalupa. xo, Mom"

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

In a living room den, Jake settles onto a chair with a plate of cold Chalupa and his laptop. He opens it. Instagram.

On screen, a tab is open to the photo of a black girl, **Erika**, smiling with her arm around a dark-skinned boyfriend. They both wear **KENYON** sweatshirts. Jake closes the tab.

He then searches Alyssa's Instagram webpage. Jake cracks a smile while looking through pictures: her Jewish sorority; sketches she's drawn; a #throwback, skating with her dad.

Jake sees that, then has a thought. He opens YouTube. In the search tab, he types: **"michelle kwan figure skating."** Various skating videos of Kwan show up. He selects one video, called: **Michelle Kwan 1998 Short Program**. The video loads...

ON LAPTOP SCREEN: We see 18-year-old Michelle Kwan. As sad classical music begins, she SPINS slowly, throws out her arms, RUNS dramatically forward, and LAUNCHES into a skate.

Jake looks surprised. The dramatics are fully new to him.

Kwan GLIDES freely, gracefully, while picking up speed into a two-jump combination. As she does, a commentator commentates:

SKATING COMMENTATOR (O.C.)

Triple lutz...! Double toe!

Kwan LANDS both moves. She SMILES, arms out. Keeps gliding.

SKATING COMMENTATOR (CONT'D)

Straight. Easy.

Jake raises his eyebrows. He's impressed, maybe a bit moved.

Then, he hears FOOTSTEPS. Fuck. Fearing that someone might discover him watching this video, he closes YouTube. Silence.

After a beat, he types a saved search: **redtube lesbian porn**

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY KITCHEN - MORNING

One week later. One gorgeous kitchen. Preston walks in as his mom CLARISSA (57, friendly, elegant in yoga pants) stands by a kitchen island. She holds a green cloth sample to his face.

CLARISSA

Honey? I've been thinking seafoam
for this year's holiday card. Or do
you think that's too close to 2006?

On the counter, we see years of HOLIDAY CARDS showing Preston, two parents, and three older sisters. They wear matching smiles and preppy sweaters in each. Preston shrugs.

PRESTON

Whatever you think, mom.

CLARISSA

Don't whatever-you-think me! You
were gone in last year's! My church
gals thought you'd raptured. Just
like this iddy-biddy waistline.

She pokes at his stomach, playfully. Preston LAUGHS. Tickled. She keeps tickling until she clutches him in a big, fond HUG.

CLARISSA (CONT'D)

Stay longer! Commuting isn't such a
drag! Train is great for reading,
or listening to funny white actors
complain about their weeks...

Then, Preston's dad, PRESTON JR. ("JUNIOR") enters. He's stern, imposing in pleated pants. Clarissa un-hugs Preston.

JUNIOR

Preston. It's time to go.

PRESTON

Oh, sorry dad. Just have to repack
one more --

JUNIOR

Really? I only played nine holes
because you wanted to miss traffic.

INT. JUNIOR'S CAR - A FEW HOURS LATER

Junior drives Preston in his luxury sedan. Dad focuses on the bridge traffic as son stares blankly out the passenger window. He looks at the Manhattan skyline. Neither talks.

On the radio, a bebop jazz riff is ending. Then, we hear the agonizingly mellow voice of a JAZZ RADIO HOST:

JAZZ RADIO HOST (O.S.)
 And next, on...Jazz 98. We'll hear:
 Sarah Vaughan. Singing. A showtune.
 From...composer, Stephen Sondheim.

Vaughan's 1974 recording of "Send in the Clowns" begins:

SARAH VAUGHAN (CROONING) (O.S.)
*Isn't it rich...? Are we a pair...?
 Me here at last on the ground...*

JUNIOR
 This isn't jazz.

Junior abruptly changes it. The excruciating bore of GOLF COMMENTARY comes on. Preston keeps gazing out the window.

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER HALLWAY - AN HOUR LATER

Junior shows Preston around a polished but sterile 1-bedroom apartment. Junior hands Preston a set of keys and a Post-It.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 I don't want this password getting
 out, so memorize it if you can.

The Post-It reads **WiFi Password: T1D16719rq88889jhlK8q887bnr**

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 When you see Baskin in the office,
 tell him he owes me a squash match.

PRESTON
 I'd rather not play up the fact
 that you know him. If that's okay.

JUNIOR
 Okay. Very good. Hard work needs to
 stand for itself, right?

Preston nods. Junior sticks his arm out for a handshake.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 Well. Have a good summer.

PRESTON

Dad, I'll see you in a week. Ava's engagement party?

JUNIOR

Oh. Of course. Well, until then.

They exchange a firm handshake. Junior leaves. Preston, now by himself, takes a deep breath.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - THAT AFTERNOON

Jake is asleep in his childhood bedroom, a shrine to The Fugees, NY Mets, and LeVar Burton in *Star Trek*.

Jake's mom NANCY (52, Jewish, anxiously reassuring) not-so-subtly nudges him awake. A clock reads **1:13 P.M.**

NANCY

Jakey? Your Black Student Union newsletter came. The one I get for my "talented ten-dollar" donation? But, I don't see your name in it.

JAKE

I...stopped going this semester.

NANCY

What? Aw, honey! I told you: don't let anyone ever tell you're not --

JAKE

Mom! It's not a big deal, okay?

NANCY

But I thought you started making new friends since you joined! And wasn't there a girl you asked to --

JAKE

Momm-uh! Stop social-worker-ing me!

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Back in his apartment, Preston hangs button-down shirts in a closet. He lines up skin creams and cologne on a dresser.

Then, he changes into a workout tank and shorts. In the mirror, he checks the status of his recent biceps.

EXT. CHELSEA STREET - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Preston jogs past a local gym. He stops to look at a sign:
**"APRIL HUSTLES BRING MAY MUSCLES (JUNE & JULY TOO!) -- COME
 IN FOR YOUR THREE-DAY SUMMER TRIAL!"** He walks in.

INT. CHELSEA GYM - A BIT LATER

Shots of manicured men working on their whey-protein bodies.

Preston, sweating mid-workout, drinks from a water fountain. As he lifts his head, he sees a veiny BODYBUILDER shout-grunting ("**HWAUGHHHH! HWAUGHHHH!**") through a chest workout. With each rep, an equally beefy SPOTTER is shout-counting:

SPOTTER

SEVEN! EIGHT! C'mon, you got this.
 You're the sultan! NINE! TEN! Show
 me TEN, sultan! Are you the SULTAN?
 SHOW! ME! WHO'S! THE! SULTAN!

As the bodybuilder wheezes through his tenth arduous rep...

BODYBUILDER

IIII'M THE FUCKINGGGG SULTANNNNN!

Oof. Preston glances across the room to a handsome stranger who is also eyeing this machismo display, with vicious judgment. This handsome, disapproving stranger is CAMERON.

Cameron is 25, white, slender but powerful. Instead of sneakers, Cameron wears leather boots with his trendy gym t-shirt and shorts. His coiffed hair looks expensive.

SPOTTER

Fuck yes you're the sultan! Unnngh!

As spotter high-fives sultan, Cameron spots Preston's glance. Cameron raises an eyebrow as if to ask, "A bit much, no?" Preston gives a chuckle as if to reply, "Tell me about it."

Cameron then winces at Preston. Mocking the bodybuilder's face, he silently mouths: "*IIII'M THE FUCKINGGGG SULTANNNNN!*"

Preston actual-laughs this time. He smiles at the handsome stranger. Until the voice of a FUSSY MAN creeps behind him.

FUSSY MAN

Well are we hydrating or not?!

Preston looks behind at an impatient line for the fountain.

PRESTON

Oh! I'm so sorry...

Mortified, Preston moves out of the way. He then looks back over to Cameron. But Cameron's gone.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - NIGHT

Jake sits with his laptop while simultaneously watching TV. On it, the *LIVING SINGLE* theme song by Queen Latifah starts.

LIVING SINGLE THEME (O.S.)

*We are living...single!
Ooooo, and in a '90s kinda world,
I'm glad I got my GIRLS!*

Jake PAUSES the show. On his phone, he types a TEXT to
Preston: Recorded Living Single. Wanna FaceTime in?

While waiting, he searches Alyssa's Instagram. He nervously hovers over the FOLLOW button. Click? Click. Okay.

Still waiting, he opens that girl Erika's page. There's a new photo of her with her boyfriend. The caption reads, "**Prez & First Lady of #BlackStudentUnion!**" Jake frowns at this.

PING. A response from Preston. Jake's face perks up. He reads the TEXT from **Preston: Sorry, can't. Work tomorrow.**

Jake's perk fades again. He changes the channel from *LIVING SINGLE* to a re-run of *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*.

INT. RICKSHAW CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A trendy start-up conference room where TED BASKIN (57, semi-retired "cool dad" look) talks to five college students.

BASKIN

Welcome, interns! I'm Ted Baskin, and I was brought on as the CEO of RickShaw last year. So that means, just like you, I'm here to learn from this expanding company's brilliant, diverse staff.

Preston looks out the glass wall at this company's staffers. Almost all are white and male.

BASKIN (CONT'D)

Including, of course, our inspiring co-founders. Judd? Lest? Any words of motivation for the new interns?

We see the two pasty co-founders: LEST, 23, blank-faced in a hoodie; and JUDD, 24, pulsing with manic energy.

LEST
Not really.

JUDD
Hey, yeah, I do. There's mainly one thing we need from you interns...

STEWART, an eager intern, whispers to Preston, anticipating:

STEWART
Hard work...!

JUDD
Don't fuck anything for us! I won't lie: not a whole lot for you noobs to do. We don't even know what to do with the full-employment noobs.

Preston looks back outside. He notices that workers are mostly milling about or playing ping-pong.

JUDD (CONT'D)
So please just don't get us in any more shit on social media? We already spent too much for Baskin here to clean up shop after Lest's incident at P.F. Chang's.

Lest shrugs. Baskin, mortified, laughs to cover the silence.

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - MOMENTS LATER

Preston sets up his desk in a large cubicle set aside for interns. Stewart sets up at the desk next to him.

STEWART
Actually kinda psyched there's not much work. We got all summer to bro out -- make a good impress!

PRESTON
Yeah. Could be good, I guess...

Preston, shy, looks away. Stewart, sensing Preston thinks he's too cool for school, rolls his eyes.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - A BIT LATER

Jake watches a Mets game on mute while making a phone call:

JAKE

Hi! I'm calling with regard to the graphic design internship you have.

(beat)

Oh. You filled it already?

Now on another call...

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm an Africana Studies major at Kenyon with a 3.6 and a can-do --

(beat)

Filled in March, really?

And another...

JAKE (CONT'D)

No, I'm not proficient in Photoshop. But Adobe Reader...?

Call is ended. Jake holds up a middle finger to his phone.

INT. CHELSEA GYM - NIGHT

More shots of men working on their glutes and vanity.

As Preston walks through the gym, several eyes make prolonged contact with his. He doesn't sustain the glances, though. He is looking for that handsome stranger. Nowhere to be found.

INT. GYM LOCKER ROOM - THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Preston, towel around his waist, walks past other changing bodies. He carries his own half-confidently as he approaches a steam room. But before entering the foggy glass door, he notices two BURLY MEN inside, making out.

Preston is paralyzed. Should he leave? Enter? Watch? One of the men REACHES under the other's towel. That man CLOSES his eyes toward the ceiling. Preston GULPS, looking on. Until...

Thud. Preston, startled, looks behind him. Feet away, Cameron has just tossed a gym bag onto a locker room bench.

Cameron, SMIRKING, lifts a judgmental eyebrow at Preston. As he packs up his yoga mat, Preston scurries to the showers.

INT. CHELSEA GYM LOBBY - MINUTES LATER

Preston, changed into jeans and a button-down, approaches an overly peppy GYM MEMBERSHIP REP behind the lobby counter.

PRESTON

Hi. I was hoping to sign up for a summer membership.

GYM MEMBERSHIP REP

Beach season! Show some dolphins that body! Just need a credit card.

We see that Cameron is at the adjacent smoothie bar, watching Preston as he hands over an American Express Gold Card.

GYM MEMBERSHIP REP (CONT'D)

"Preston Blake Hollis I-I-I?" What do the three I's stand for? Let me guess: Ivan? Izzy? Ooh, I-reese!

EXT. CHELSEA GYM - MOMENTS LATER

As Preston exits, he sees Cameron outside, standing by the door. In one hand, Cameron SIPs an amino health drink. In the other hand, he SMOKES a cigarette. He watches Preston.

Preston nervously walks away. But then, on second thought, he turns around, desiring any excuse to approach Cameron.

PRESTON

Hey, sorry. Can I get a cigarette?

Cameron shrugs, sure. He reaches to get Preston a cigarette.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Wait! I um...don't smoke. Sorry.

Beat. Cameron takes a long cigarette DRAG as he studies Preston's apologetic face. And then, finally, he speaks:

CAMERON

I noticed you trying to join a steam room rendezvous. Don't.

PRESTON

Oh, I wasn't --

CAMERON

It's just a bit...beneath us? I mean, I had my fun on the sauna circuit, but we children have to grow up eventually. One can't jerk off old men in towels forever.

Cameron's voice is as alluring as it is bossy. Either way, its confidence terrifies Preston.

PRESTON

I...really just came for a workout.

Cameron smiles as he exhales another cigarette drag.

CAMERON

Of course. You have to burn off the calories from that Negroni somehow.

PRESTON

Negroni? What Negroni?

CAMERON

The barrel-aged drink we're having this...Wednesday? At say, 4pm?

PRESTON

Actually, I'm --

CAMERON

More of a whiskey drinker? How very masc. Fine, I'll allow you to order a "*Boulevardier*."

PRESTON

I was saying I'm at work until 7.

CAMERON

Huh. You work. Fascinating. Well, I don't know you well enough to watch me eat solids. So, let's do after-dinner drinks? 9:30? Raja House.

Cameron hands over a business card. The front of the card simply reads: **CAMERON** -- nothing else.

PRESTON

It's a...plan.

Cameron raises two fingers to his lips. With them, he then makes a peace sign. Winks. And then, he stomps away...

Preston looks back at Cameron's card. He turns it over. On the other side, it simply reads: **@cameron** -- nothing else.

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER LIVING ROOM - LATER

Preston sits on his laptop, in the middle of a TV-watching FaceTime hang. The *LIVING SINGLE* opening plays on his TV.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - CONTINUOUS

Jake has his laptop open to the FaceTime with Preston. On his TV, the *LIVING SINGLE* theme continues:

LIVING SINGLE THEME SONG (O.S.)
We are living...single!
Ooooo, and in a '90s kinda world,
I'm glad I got my GIRLS!

Intercut with Preston.

PRESTON
 Okay. This was an inspired idea.

JAKE
 Right, son? Oh! Wait. Almost forgot
 -- Alyssa followed back on Insta!

PRESTON
 Wow. Congrats. Will your registry
 be at IKEA or Applebee's?

JAKE
 You mock, but I just completed
 phase one of getting a summer G-F.

PRESTON
 Well, in a surprise twist, I think
 I might have a date this week?

JAKE
 No way! Like, with a dude? Dude!

PRESTON
 Yeah, this guy at my gym. Asked me
 to get a drink on Wednesday.

JAKE
 Oh, bummer. Did you tell him you're
 terminally lame on work nights?

PRESTON
 Well, I figured I should say yes
 since I'm home this weekend for the
 engagement party. I told my mom
 you're coming, by the way.

JAKE
 Dope. Wow, so you just like...go to
 a gym? And then, like...have a
 date? Being gay is mad easy, huh?

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - NEXT AFTERNOON

Preston, at his desk, stares at his computer. An open word document says **TO DO LIST: 1.) Restock paper clips. 2.) Pick up mozz sticks for Lest. 3.) Figure out what else to do.**

Then, Stewart slides his desk chair over to him.

STEWART

Hollis! The other "ints" and I are playing kickball tonight. You in?

PRESTON

No, sorry. I have plans tonight.

STEWART

Bummer sauce! Could def use ballin' skills like yours out there.

Preston doesn't respond as he opens up Google and types in a new search: **how many calories in a negroni?**

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER BEDROOM - THAT EVENING

Sarah Vaughan's recording of "I Feel Pretty" plays as Preston unconfidently tries on button-down shirts in the mirror...

He tries on a green shirt; then a blue one; then green again; now a black one; then blue again. Nope, he settles for green.

INT. RAJA HOUSE - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Preston hurries into the oak-toned lobby of an upscale club. A HOSTESS (stylish, unfriendly) looks at him quizzically.

PRESTON

Hello, I'm here for drinks. There might be a reservation? Cameron?

HOSTESS

Is Cameron his first or last name?

Preston panics, not actually certain of the answer.

HOSTESS (CONT'D)

I'm only joking. We know Cameron.

PRESTON

I'm guessing he's here already?
Sorry I'm twelve minutes late.

HOSTESS

No? The reservation is for 9:45.

Before Preston can check his phone, Cameron swoops in from behind, majestically, out of nowhere, and begins lecturing.

CAMERON

Always book your table for fifteen minutes after you tell someone to meet. Otherwise you'll waste your youth waiting on "friends" to arrive late. As they always do.

PRESTON

Sorry. I'm never usually this late.

CAMERON

Exactly. You're two minutes early.

Cameron winks. He hands the hostess his suede messenger bag.

INT. RAJA HOUSE COCKTAIL LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

The hostess seats them at a wide booth. Cameron eases in. This cocktail lounge is packed, exciting, sophisticated.

PRESTON

Wow. This place is really --

CAMERON

Bland? I know. But they have "young patron" specials to bring down the age from forty-ancient. So, here we babes are. Tell me about yourself.

PRESTON

Okay. Well, I'm --

CAMERON

You're a rising senior at Penn...U, not State. You're from non-Hamptons Long Island, even though your dad's got that Hamptons money. And your major is...oh, it's something dull.

PRESTON

Logic, Information and Computation. How did you know all that?

CAMERON

Aren't you an Ivy League student, Cream-Cheese? It's called homework.

Cameron winks again. Preston gulps, mesmerized.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Also I got bored in my cab here and
spent 17 seconds on your LinkedIn.
(calling out to waiter)
Hi, sober here! Might we fix that?

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT, SAME TIME

Jake, pacing nervously in his room, makes a phone call...

JAKE

Alyssa! Hi! It's Jake! LaPorte!

INT. ALYSSA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In her bedroom, Alyssa answers. Confused, but intrigued, she puts down a pencil on the desk where she's been sketching.

ALYSSA

Oh. Hey, Jake! What's...up?

Intercut with Jake.

JAKE

I was calling to say, um, thanks.
For the Instagram follow!

ALYSSA

You called? To thank me? For that?

JAKE

Oh. Yeah! I noticed you only follow
about seventy peeps who aren't
animals or celebrities.

ALYSSA

Uh huh. Figure somebody's gotta hit
like on Oprah's posts about bread.

Jake cackles. Alyssa's smiles, but still fairly weirded out.

JAKE

Well, if you ever want any company
while looking at her Instagram...

INT. RAJA HOUSE COCKTAIL LOUNGE - A BIT LATER

Cameron and Preston are half-way through a round of Negronis.

CAMERON

Studied abroad in Paris? *Parfait!*
Government may be full of men who
took Spanish. But society's run by
us gals who sat at French table.

Preston nods, compliant. He then checks his posture. Cameron,
sensing his nerves, leans forward inquisitively.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

So. Preston. Who's your type?

PRESTON

My type? Is that a weird thing to
talk about on...um, you know...

CAMERON

On what? An empty stomach?

PRESTON

No, no. I meant...on a date.

Through an uncomfortable silence, Cameron TILTS his head --
half-apologetic, half-condescending. Preston realizes...

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Oh. This...isn't a date.

CAMERON

Aw! Babe! No.

PRESTON

Fuck. I am so sorry. Please pretend
I never said that.

CAMERON

Don't be silly! I forget when I
meet a person in person that you
have no way of knowing my type. Or
that I already have a boyfriend who
lives in Milan.

PRESTON

Long-distance! That's gotta be --

CAMERON

Perfect. I'm too young to be
settled down with some kind of...

PRESTON

Life partner?

CAMERON

...cat. But I'm also too old to be dating twenty-somethings, you know?

PRESTON

Yeah. Wait. Sorry, how old are you?

CAMERON

25. Sure. But my out age is 14.

PRESTON

Out age?

CAMERON

Yes. Every gay man has an age and an out age. Take my boyfriend. He's 45, but he didn't come out until he was 31. So, he might be two decades older, in hetero-mortal years, but we're actually the same out age.

PRESTON

Meaning you came out at eleven?

CAMERON

Talent show. My talent was drama.

Preston's phone blares: a FaceTime request from Jake.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Need to take that?

PRESTON

Oh no. It's...nobody. Sorry.

Preston hits IGNORE. He places the phone on silent.

CAMERON

So, at what age were you out-born?
I'm gonna guess...sixteen?

PRESTON

Oh. No. More recently than that.

CAMERON

Okay. Freshman year of college?

Preston shakes his head. Nervous. He doesn't want to have to come out about coming out.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Before or after you put on that 378-dollar cologne this evening?

PRESTON
 Within the past...few...weeks...

Preston is mortified. Cameron scowls at this, surprised.

CAMERON
You're a gay baby.

And then, Cameron's scowl releases into a wide grin.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
 You're in the city all summer?

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - THE NEXT MORNING

Preston, tired at his office desk, receives a TEXT MESSAGE from **Jake: Dude. FaceTime me! It's an emergency!**

INT. RICKSHAW CONFERENCE ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Preston hurriedly takes his laptop into the empty conference room. He opens the screen and calls Jake on FaceTime.

PRESTON
 Hey! Hey man. What's going on?

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - SIMULTANEOUS

Jake, eating cereal, is on his laptop. Intercut with Preston.

JAKE
 There you are. So I called Alyssa, and it was a hard yes on bein' my G-F. But, I got caught in the moment and might have agreed to see that Space-Gandhi movie I promised we'd see. I know. I know. Don't hate me.

PRESTON
 That's the emergency that required interrupting my work day?

Preston looks out the glass wall. Interns play Twister.

PRESTON (CONT'D)
 Anyway, obviously I don't hate you. And sorry about last night. I was at drinks with that guy.

JAKE
Your date! Right! Was he awesome?

PRESTON

Well, turned out it wasn't a date.

JAKE

Rough. Forget that dude! He sucks.

PRESTON

No. It actually was pretty fun. I think I'm seeing him again tonight.

JAKE

Again? Like as a...friend?

PRESTON

Yeah. He's hosting a drinks thing. Figure it'd be good for me to make a few gay friends while I'm here.

JAKE

Huh. I guess if it's not weird.

INT. CAMERON'S STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

Preston, dressed spiffy, is being led by Cameron through his foyer. Impressive queer paintings hang on the wall.

PRESTON

These are incredible. You said your boyfriend's an art dealer, right?

CAMERON

Jean-Olaf? Yes, but he's really more of a performance art dealer.

INT. CAMERON'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They arrive in a PALATIAL LIVING ROOM. Everything in it, from the white furniture to the two other white friends, is sleek.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Flock, come meet a new sheep...

We meet TIMMI. He is 22, statuesque but playfully bubbly. His muscular frame seems like it could blow away in the wind.

TIMMI

Hi! I'm Timmi. That's two I's, two M's, one T. Not in that order.

CAMERON

Timmi's a model-slash-actor. Former actor-slash-model. Future trophy-husband-slash-divorcé.

TIMMI

Ugh! I so aspire to that.

The other friend is DANIEL. He is 24, short, redheaded, vicious. He paces at the side of the room on his phone.

CAMERON

Daniel! What did I say about conference-ing in my duplex?

Daniel rolls his eyes and gets off his phone call.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

That's Daniel. Finance gay. Often to be found on a call with London.

DANIEL

London? Please. Hong Kong, bitch.

Daniel struts back over to the couches where the rest hover.

CAMERON

Friends. Meet "Preston Blake Hollis the Third." A mouthful, I know.

PRESTON

Oh. Friends usually call me "P.B."

DANIEL

"P-B?" We most certainly will not.

TIMMI

Nobody ever got fucked while being named P.B. Here's your vodka soda.

Timmi hands Preston the drink he never ordered or requested.

INT. CAMERON'S LIVING ROOM - HALF HOUR LATER

Clink. Cameron, Daniel, Timmi and Preston are onto a second.

PRESTON

So, how'd you guys become friends?

DANIEL

By not being awful? Every gay in this city tends to be basic, or ugly, or judgmental...

CAMERON

We gravitated, and then we stuck, and soon enough we'd merged to form "Balsamic Vinegar."

PRESTON

Oh! You guys have a band?

TIMMI

A "band?" Wow, I haven't heard that word since I was in the closet.

DANIEL

Might as well ask if we "play pick-up basketball." Or "eat pussy."

CAMERON

No, "Balsamic Vinegar" is what we call our three-person text thread. We do have other friends. And we know everyone, of course.

DANIEL

But we can't add every Tom, Dick or Hairy Dick. We're a fucking family.

TIMMI

Cheers to that! Here's your shot.

Timmi hands Preston a tequila shot he hadn't asked for.

PRESTON

Oh, I'm good. Should probably get home soon. I've got work tomorrow.

DANIEL

So? We all do, except for Cameron and Timmi. That's not stopping us from gay-clubbing on a Thursday.

PRESTON

We're going to a club? Tonight?

DANIEL

Yes, Cinderella. If you're worried about sleep, just do what I do. Eat a 5-Hour Energy for breakfast.

TIMMI

Cheers!

They lift their tequila shots as we cut to...

INT. "THE HUNTER" GAY BAR - AN HOUR LATER

Clink. Cameron, Timmi, Daniel and Preston down shots at THE HUNTER, a gay bar where men are standing around as music plays. Preston winces taking the shot. The others don't.

CAMERON

Preston, why is your Insta blocked?

PRESTON

Oh. I hear it's a bad career move to be public on Instagram. Gotta make that money, right?

He chuckles nervously. The other three don't return a smile.

DANIEL

Wrong. Gotta be that money. Why hide your life from straight employers when you can show your straight coworkers you're more interesting than they are?

TIMMI

Exactly. You're queer, you're black, you're young, you're hot...

Preston spits out some vodka soda.

CAMERON

Define yourself by places like here. Where you look around and know you're with your own kind.

Preston considers this as he looks around. Big crowd. Lots of gay men his age. Almost all are white.

Then, the song "Come Into My World" by Kylie Minogue starts to pulse. Daniel, Timmi and Cameron sway along familiarly to this club jam as they drink. Preston's tense face eases up.

PRESTON

You guys know this song?!

DANIEL

Duh we know this song.

PRESTON

My sister had this CD when I was a kid! And I stole it from her! And hid it in a blink-182 case!

CAMERON

I'm so sorry you had to go through purchasing a blink-182 CD.

Preston laughs, smiles. He starts dance-swaying with them.

PRESTON

I'm glad you guys convinced me to come 'til the end of the night!

CAMERON

End? What do you mean "end?"

INT. GAY CLUB - AN HOUR LATER

Clink. The four boys down four more tequila shots at FLAVOR, a louder, more packed gay club with a proper dance floor.

A thick, chic 30-year-old friend named SAL waves at them. As Sal walks over, Cameron explains him in whispers to Preston.

CAMERON

That's Dumb Sal. Sadly, he's dumb. Fortunately, he always has drugs.

SAL

You guys! Audrey Hepburn died!

DANIEL

Sal, she died twenty years ago.

SAL

I know! Isn't it sad?! Anyway, now I'm over it. Who's this?

CAMERON

Sal, this is Preston. He's new in town, for the summer.

SAL

Summer ho? Get that August Osage Bounty. Are you a top or bottom?

PRESTON

Who? Me? Oh. I don't...um...

Sal awaits an answer. The others sense Preston's discomfort.

TIMMI

Sal, you can't ask everyone that. Remember the St. Jude's benefit?

SAL

How can I know who to introduce him to until I know if he T's or B's?

PRESTON

Oh, um. I don't...know, actually?

All four now give Preston a shocked look.

DANIEL

What do you mean you don't know?
You mean you're vers? You do both?

PRESTON

Oh. Um, no. I've never...neither...

Suddenly, it dawns on these guys how very young and barely out Preston is. They smile at him, condescendingly.

TIMMI

So? What else should we talk about?

Preston is mortified. He senses they've realized he's not cool. Not mature. Not gay enough. They finally stop talking at Preston and begin to chat amongst themselves.

DANIEL

Did we all see RuPaul this week?
That motherfucking lip-sync...

TIMMI

I know. I'd kill to death-drop like that. It's so lame that we don't even know anyone who can.

And suddenly, Preston's mood shifts.

PRESTON

I can death-drop.

The boys turn to Preston, all with scoffs on their face.

SAL

You haven't fucked a man, but you know how to death drop?

TIMMI

Do you...know what a death drop is?

DANIEL

We don't mean bungee-jumping, hon.
It's a dance move drag queens do.
Like, the hardest one there is.

PRESTON

I know. I might not have been out in high school, but I had locked doors, YouTube tutorials, and an indoor trampoline room. I taught myself how to death-drop.

CAMERON

Then let's see it. Death-drop.

The boys step five feet away, clearing a space. As they wait for Preston to dance-fall, he suddenly gets bashful.

PRESTON

Oh, I dunno. I've honestly never done a death-drop in public before.

SAL

See? I've always known he couldn't.

PRESTON

I'm sorry, guys. I would do it for you. But, um, I'm just feeling kind of drunk, and nervous, and well --

THUD! Preston falls down to the floor, LANDING on his back in a PERFECT DEATH-DROP. The four other boys, shocked by both his move and his fake-out, screech with excitement.

TIMMI

That. Was. EVERYTHING.

Preston stands up, unscathed by his fabulous fall. Men all around the crowded club start snapping. YASSS-ing. Daniel and Timmi come to Cameron's side, dazzled in amazement.

DANIEL

Do we...get to keep him?

INT. MOVIE THEATER LOBBY - NEXT NIGHT

Movie snack line. Jake and Alyssa wait in adjacent lines. They smile at each other, with anxious competitive energy.

ALYSSA

I'm totally getting to the front of my line before you!

JAKE

Please. I invented "Popcorn Line Wait Grand Prix." Old dude always trumps flustered mom-of-three.

In front of Alyssa, there's a MOM with WHINY CHILDREN. In front of Jake, an OLD MAN. As the mother pays with a debit card, the old man fumbles, counting pennies in hand.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Exact change? No! C'mon, grandpa!

ALYSSA
 YES! Ha. You're buying.

As the mom and kids leave, Alyssa victoriously waltzes to the VENDOR in front of her. Jake leaves his line to join.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)
 Hey! One medium Diet Coke and a Raisinettes. And he'll have...

JAKE
 Wow. You raised soda prices, huh?

The popcorn clerk nods. As Jake anxiously studies the menu...

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Make it a small...cup for water.

INT. LONG ISLAND DINER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake and Alyssa sit at the diner, post-movie. They're in the middle of conversation, laughing.

JAKE
 What do you mean my Bar Mitzvah theme was "a bit un-kosher?"

ALYSSA
 Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing*? I don't think that's exactly the freedom our people fled Egypt for.

JAKE
 Woow. And to think I sat you at the "Radio Raheem" table...

ALYSSA
 So. Think any pubescent Jewish boys will have a Space-Gandhi reception?

JAKE
 Oof! Definitely not. But, um. I'm still...glad we saw that movie.

He slides his PINKY on the table to touch her hand. She lets it rest there. For a beat. Until suddenly, she pulls it away.

ALYSSA
 Jake. Sorry, but I actually...have a boyfriend back at school.

She grants him a sorry smile. Jake, humiliated, struggles to play it cool as he responds. She listens, feeling terrible.

JAKE

Oh! Me too! A girlfriend. Well, on-off. We went out a few -- anyway. Ha! Did you, like, think I was...?

ALYSSA

Dude? It's cool. I had fun tonight. We can still hang as friends. Yeah?

JAKE

Totally. I love friends. I mean, I like friends. Friends are chill.

INT. JAKE'S CAR - THE NEXT DAY

Jake, in a blazer and sloppily-tied tie, waits at Huntington Station as a train finally arrives. He's more sullen today.

Preston emerges from the train, also in a blazer and tie. He looks exhausted as he paces into Jake's car.

PRESTON

Sorry, sorry, so sorry! I got on the wrong train like an idiot.

JAKE

Honestly kind of an honor to not be the late one. Here's your Jen Aniston milk.

Jake hands Preston a bottle of Smart Water.

PRESTON

Bless. I am way too hungover to deal with this engagement party.

JAKE

You got drunk last night?

PRESTON

Yeah. I was, um, out with that guy Cameron and his other friends.

JAKE

Last night? I thought you were gonna do that Thursday night.

PRESTON

Yeah. But we...went out again.

JAKE

Oh. Well, speaking of. Alyssa and I also decided it's best to just be --

Preston receives and laughs at a text on his phone. He hasn't heard Jake's attempt to change the conversation.

PRESTON
Sorry, man, what'd you say?

JAKE
Oh, um. It's nothing. Hey -- if I give you cash, could you buy me a bottle of wine to give your family?

PRESTON
I cannot wait for you to turn 21.

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY FRONT HALLWAY - A BIT LATER

Preston and Jake enter the Hollis's house. Clarissa, wearing a sun dress and pearls, paces in her heels to hug Preston.

CLARISSA
There's our handsome prince!

JAKE
And he brought your son too!

Clarissa chuckles and waves "Oh stop!" at Jake. He hands her a cheap bottle of screw-top Pinot Grigio. She maintains a grin while peeling the price tag he forgot to remove.

CLARISSA
Jake! You shouldn't have! Now, hungry guys, get out and try some hors d'oeuvres. The truffle catfish tartare-tlets are just divine!

EXT. HOLLIS FAMILY BACKYARD - A BIT LATER

Jake and Preston stand around a crowded lawn. We see spiffy outfits. Champagne. A string quartet playing Duke Ellington.

JAKE
Hey! Another ham-hock spring roll?

Jake flags down a SERVER: 28, Mediterranean, hot. This guy's catering garb doesn't suit his stylish buzz-cut or earrings.

PRESTON
None for me, sorry.

SERVER
Got it. I'll forgive you. Maybe.

This server lingers, for a moment of deliberate EYE CONTACT with Preston. Preston GULPS. Jake chews, noticing none of it.

As the server struts away, Jake's oldest sister JESSICA (a mature 33) walks over with their grandma EVELYN (a young 84).

JESSICA

Grandma. You remember Preston's friend Jake, right?

EVELYN

Do I remember! I used to pick these two up from school! And I'd say: that boy might be Jewish, but I sure do like him anyway!

She laughs, squeezing Jake into a hug. He laughs, too, but with a look of "Wait, what?" Preston and Jessica roll eyes.

JESSICA

Jake, any idea what you'll do after graduation next year?

JAKE

Well that's...hella far away. But I dunno! I've been thinking of trying to teach myself Photoshop.

EVELYN

Photography? My friend Cleo needs someone to take pictures she has, and put them on her computer. I said: "Cleo! You mean with Scotch tape?" Not with Scotch tape!

JESSICA

It's called scanning, grandma.

PRESTON

Jake, maybe that's a thing you could do with your summer.

Jake looks annoyed by Preston speaking on his behalf.

JAKE

That's...not really the kind of computer design I had in mind.

EVELYN

Too bad. Twenty dollars an hour!

JAKE

And what is Cleo's phone number?

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner time. The large dining room is filled with small tables. Preston's parents sit with other couples their age.

At another table: Preston's sisters Jessica, LESLIE (31, pregnant) and AVA (27) sit with their black male partners.

Jake and Preston sit at a kids' table. Preston's 5-year-old NEPHEW looks at Jake, smiling, and holds up seven fingers.

NEPHEW

I have this many girlfriends.

Jake nods. He then turns to Preston, distracted on his phone.

JAKE

Jeez. Are you on, like, a text chain with these gay guys?

PRESTON

No. I mean, they do have a thread, but not with me. Which is okay.

JAKE

Yeah -- I'm on one with my mom and my Aunt Joan. Gets hella annoying.

From his table, Junior stands and CLINKS a glass. Hush hush.

JUNIOR

Hello all. Since Clarissa and I are so thrilled to host you tonight, I thought I'd say a few words about this home. The home where Ava grew up -- from diapers, to Barbies, to that unfortunate hair braids phase.

JESSICA AND LESLIE (IN UNISON)

(rapping the *Moesha* theme)

"M to the...O to the...E to the...*Moesha!*"

The two oldest sisters laugh, teasing their sister. Ava, annoyed, throws crumbs of rosemary cornbread at them.

JUNIOR

Anyhow. Joyous as this occasion may be, it also means our third little girl is starting a home of her own now. A family of her own. With a name that...sadly, isn't Hollis.

CLARISSA

Ooh, why'd I wear my Y-S-L mascara!

JUNIOR

Still, it brings us comfort to know that Ava's children will be raised by a good man -- a good black man.

Ava's fiancé nods. Grunts of affirmation from the room.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

And also, that we're blessed to still have our son, Preston the third, to pass on that Hollis name.

Smiling eyes turn fondly to Preston. He looks panicked.

AVA

Awww, look. Baby bro is blushing!

EVELYN

He'll be hitched any day now! I bet those Philly girls are all over him -- lookin' all fit...!

Jake looks sympathetically at Preston, who STARES down. With a fork, he shuffles salad over peeled-off fried chicken skin.

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Coffee and dessert are out. Guests tap feet as an operatic SOPRANO sings the jaunty Negro spiritual "His Name So Sweet."

SOPRANO (SINGING)

*Po' Sinner! Do you love Jesus?
His name so sweet...*

To the side, Jake spots Preston packing up his backpack.

JAKE

There you are! Ready to finally get out of here and head to my place?

PRESTON

I actually might head back to the city. Think I kind of O-D'd on Long Island and parent shit for one day.

JAKE

No *Living Single* marathon? We're almost at the one where Maxine and 18-year-old Terence Howard get they May-December on.

PRESTON

I just need to head home and sleep off this hangover. Wake up in my bed. Any chance I can get a ride?

INT. JAKE'S CAR - AN HOUR LATER

Jake pulls up back to Huntington Station to drop off Preston. Preston glares out the window. Jake is silent, concerned.

JAKE

Sure you're okay, man? After, you know, that stuff your dad said?

PRESTON

Um...yeah. It's...whatever. Sorry I let it get me in a funk. But thanks for asking. Appreciate that a lot.

JAKE

Of course. And let's party it off soon. I know I can't crash on work nights, but maybe we can do a big city night next Saturday?

PRESTON

Definitely. Promise.

EXT. HUNTINGTON STATION - A MOMENT LATER

As he waits on the train platform, Preston gives an affectionate WAVE to Jake as the car pulls away.

Still frustrated, Preston takes a deep breath. And then, after a moment, he pulls out his phone.

He composes a TEXT to **Cameron: So. What are we up to tonight?**

INT. SEASON-5 GAY CLUB - LATER THAT NIGHT

Preston, now in a fashionable outfit, enters SEASON-5, a gay bar where Cameron, Daniel, Timmi and Sal are sitting with vodka sodas. They cheer hello as he arrives.

DANIEL

Preston! I thought you were being rich in Long Island all weekend.

SAL

Fire Island? Yasss diva!

PRESTON
Not Fire Island. In Huntington,
where I grew up.

SAL
You grew up in Fire Island? Well no
wonder you're gay!

CAMERON
Sal, I think you have some condom
in your teeth.

Sal shrieks and runs to a bathroom. Cameron, having gotten
rid of him, turns to Daniel and Timmi. They're all beaming.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
So, girls. Who wants to tell him?

PRESTON
Tell me what...?

DANIEL
Cameron? The honors?

Preston looks confused as Cameron looks down on his phone.
Taps. Until a moment later, Preston's phone gets a PING.

Preston looks at the ALERT on his screen: **Cameron has invited
you to join the group "BALSAMIC VINEGAR."** His face lights up.

PRESTON
Wait. Really? Your thread?!

TIMMI
Welcome friend! Get ready for S-T-D
freakouts and GIFS of drunk Helen
Mirren...

DANIEL
We figure you'll find your way to
the city next year. And until then,
you're only a \$186 Acela ride away.

PRESTON
Oh my...GUYS! Thank you so much!

CAMERON
Do not tell Sal. He thinks we can't
add him due to an iPhone bug. And
we all need his good coke tonight.

PRESTON
Cocaine? Oh, not for me, sorry.

TIMMI

What do you mean? I see literal yawns coming out of your mouth.

PRESTON

It's cool. I'll just get a Redbull.

DANIEL

That's fruit juice. Come on! You just joined Manhattan's innermost circle of divine. We! Celebrating!

Off of Preston's uncertain face...

INT. GAY CLUB BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sal cuts lines of cocaine on a bathroom sink counter with his credit card. Cameron and Daniel futz with their hair in the mirror. Timmi hands Preston a rolled-up \$20 bill.

TIMMI

It's bad for your nose if you use anything less than a twenty.

PRESTON

Oh. Well, guess I can't turn down a fuck-you to Andrew Jackson...

They snap. Preston is still nervous, though. He slowly leans down to a line. Until, KNOCK-KNOCK at the door. He jumps.

DANIEL

(yelling to door-knocker)
Excuse you! I have a hi-fiber diet!

CAMERON

Preston? You truly don't have to if you don't want. We're friends here. We just want you to be comfortable.

And suddenly, upon hearing this, Preston is. Confidently, he leans down, puts the \$20 to his nose, and inhales a line.

SAL

That's it, honey. Get your LIFE.

As Preston LIFTS his head, experiencing a rush, we CUT to...

INT. GAY CLUB DANCEFLOOR - LATER

Nnst. Nnst. Hard club music blasts as we see FLASHES of the boys enjoying huge fun on the dance floor. We see:

- Sal snorts bumps of cocaine off a key ring.
- Cameron passes out drinks for the other guys.
- Daniel rubs his finger on his gums while he dances.
- Timmi, shirtless, makes out with a boy on the floor.
- Preston smiles, vogues, gets his aforementioned life.

INT. CAMERON'S LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Preston wakes up fully clothed on a sofa, his drool all over an animal-hyde pillow. He turns it over. Hungover in the daylight, he winces at his phone. There's a TEXT.

From **Jake: Hope you feeling better after yesterday, my OG.**

Preston looks at this with guilt-stricken appreciation. Then, Cameron emerges from his room in underwear and a button-down.

CAMERON

Good afternoon! Hope the emu-*chaise* was fine. You had simply too much nose fun for us to send you home.

PRESTON

Oh, sorry. But thanks for that. For everything this week. It was great.

CAMERON

Was? Summer is young! Oh, that reminds me: our favorite pop-up gay rave is next Saturday. It's called "DickStupid." You're coming.

PRESTON

Shit. I wish I could, but I have a friend visiting me next weekend.

CAMERON

Friend? What's his name? I'll have Daniel add him to the V-I-P list.

PRESTON

Jake LaPorte. But, um, is it okay that he's straight?

SAL (O.S.)

Ew! You've met a straight person?!

Preston and Cameron look over and see that Sal has been asleep this whole time under the coffee table. A damn mess.

CAMERON
(clapping as he speaks)
Sal! You! Are! Literally! Thirty!

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - THE NEXT DAY

Preston is at his computer. Unexpectedly, Baskin approaches.

BASKIN
Preston! Want to chat in my office?

Preston frantically closes browsers on his computer, where he's been online-shopping for new clothes.

PRESTON
Ted! Yes! Hi! I'll be right there.

As Preston jolts up, Stewart shoots him an envious look.

INT. BASKIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Preston smiles as he struggles to sit on a beanbag across from Baskin. Anything to keep the appearance of enthusiasm.

BASKIN
So! How's the old 'tership treating ya so far? Learning a lot?

PRESTON
No, yeah! It's been so educational.

BASKIN
Fun too, I hope! Wouldn't want a pal like your dad to think the summer wasn't a blast for you.

PRESTON
Super blast.

BASKIN
Good. 'Cause, based on all the hard work, I'd say you'd be a stellar fit to work here after graduation.

PRESTON
Wow. Really? I mean, yeah! I'd love it. To be in the city next year.

BASKIN
Wonderful! That's wonderful. Not a lot of color in tech, you know...

Baskin chuckles, uncomfortable. Preston nods, uncomfortable.

INT. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER GYM - THAT AFTERNOON

Jake is on an elliptical in a rinky-dink **J.C.C. GYM**. Unlike Preston's gym, it's filled with unfit tweens and the elderly. Apart from a janitor, Jake's the only non-fully-white person.

As he runs, a FITNESS GRANDMA gets on the machine next to him and starts running. Faster than he does. Annoyed, Jake speeds up. Annoyed back, so does the lady. Eventually, both SPRINT furiously, until his earbuds jerk his iPhone, and then...

Thud. Jake's phone drops to the floor. Tweens look on with judgmental pity. The cardio granny next to him is smug. He slows. Disembarks. Picks up the phone. Its screen is cracked.

JAKE
FUCK MY LIFE!

A man in a yarmulke *shushes*, points to a sign: **NO KVETCHING.**

JAKE (CONT'D)
Oops. I meant:
(whispering, with a smile)
Fuck my life!

EXT. CLEO'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

Jake knocks on the door of a quaint home. A black woman opens. This is CLEO: 72, scowling, a suspicious gossip.

JAKE
Hi! I'm Jake! Here to help you scan photos? You must be Cleo.

CLEO
I don't have to be anybody. You're a Hollis friend? You're early.

JAKE
Am I? My phone cracked at the gym.

CLEO
Gym? Dudn't look like you go to a gym. But come in, if you must.

INT. CLEO'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cleo leads Jake into her living room. Walls are lined with floral wallpaper and posters of paintings of MLK.

She gestures to a clunky desktop computer on a dining room table. A new, unpacked scanner sits next to it.

CLEO

That's the machine my son Evan and his idiot professor wife sent me. "Women's Studies." Foolishness.

Cleo then gestures to dozens of large boxes of photos. Labels indicate many decades worth of family photos are inside them.

CLEO (CONT'D)

And there are all the photographs. Which my dumb-rocks daughter-in-law -- Ph.D. -- tells me to scan?

JAKE

Well, happy to help you!

Jake picks up one box of photos, to Cleo's absolute horror.

CLEO

No. No no. You don't lay fingers on a single photo until I've explained everything about that photo, hear? And every person in it.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - CONTINUOUS

Jake talks into his laptop screen, on FaceTime with Preston.

JAKE

And she's got a story for every one. We only got through 26 photos!

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER LIVING ROOM - LATER

Preston is distractedly texting while on the other laptop-end of Jake's FaceTime. Intercut with Jake.

PRESTON

She is the church gossip. But at least she pays by the hour, right?

JAKE

You right. Gotta stack that grandma-friend paper for our N-Y-C weekend.

PRESTON

Oh. Speaking of. Do you wanna come with me to a club Saturday night?

JAKE

Ummm, a hundred percent! Hundo per.
Huh...puh...

PRESTON

It's a gay rave, though. That cool?

Jake's excitement fades. Slightly.

JAKE

Oh. Uh, sure. But is it a problem I don't have any fake I-D?

PRESTON

No, my friend already put your name on a VIP list. Says the bouncer won't card or give us trouble, as long as we wear all-black.

JAKE

Okay! Got it. All black everything.

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER FRONT HALLWAY - EARLY EVENING

Knock on the door. Preston, party-ready in fashionable black jeans and t-shirt, opens. There's Jake in a too-tight BLACK TURTLENECK and too-baggy BLACK CARGO SHORTS.

JAKE

Y'all ready for this?!

Jake begins grunting a techno pulse ("Nnnst! Nnnst!") while head-bobbing. Preston smiles, laughs, assumes this is a bit.

PRESTON

Ha! Real nice outfit. Imagine...

Jake stops Nnnst-ing. He's suddenly embarrassed. Preston, realizing Jake is embarrassed, becomes embarrassed himself.

JAKE

Is it bad? This was all the black everything I had in my closet.

PRESTON

No! Not bad! But, um, a turtleneck might get kind of hot in the club.

JAKE

Well that's why I packed Aquafinas in my cargo pockets. For hydration.

PRESTON

Great! Besides, nobody can really see black inside a club anyway. So, um...ain't nobody gonna judge! Ha.

INT. CAMERON'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

CUT to Cameron, Daniel, and Timmi, who look shell-shocked upon meeting Jake in this outfit. Preston stands by, nervous.

CAMERON

Oh, you're Jake. I assumed from the name that Preston met you in Paris.

PRESTON

LaPorte? No, Jake's half-Haitian.

DANIEL

Ah. So *parlez français*, at least?

JAKE

Nah. My pops left when I was a kid. Or as they say in Klingon: *ghubDaQ!*

Jake chuckles, makes Vulcan salute. The others grin, uneasy.

CAMERON

Can I get you a drink, Jake?

JAKE

Sure. Do you have any IPA?

Timmi shrieks. He then covers his mouth, apologetically.

PRESTON

I'll make you a whiskey-ginger.

Cameron and Preston head to the kitchen. Timmi, Daniel and Jake sit down. A pause as all search for anything to say.

JAKE

Thanks for inviting me out with you guys tonight.

DANIEL

Thank you for joining! I know a lot of straight boys would shy away, for fear they weren't wanted.

JAKE

I've actually heard gay bars are an awesome place to meet chicks.

TIMMI

Well, gay bars exist on a spectrum. On one end, LGBT-friendly: bars for female besties and straight tourists. Tonight's club is more of a, how do you say...penis dungeon!

More uneasy grins until Cameron and Preston return with four vodka-sodas and one whiskey-ginger.

JAKE

Ooh. Thanks!

CAMERON

Nuh-uh-ah! What do we say?

Preston, Daniel and Timmi in unison, make crying faces:

PRESTON, DANIEL, TIMMI (IN UNISON)

"I THANK MY FAMILY! MY MOTHER, BLYTHE DANNER!"

They clink glasses. Cameron clocks Jake's confused.

CAMERON

Gwyneth's Oscar speech. You do know Gwyneth's Oscar speech, yes?

JAKE

Oh. No, I do! That's right! Ha-ha!

Jake holds out his glass, but the others have moved on.

DANIEL

So tonight. That one gay partner at my firm will be there. That means I need everybody on their best and gayest behavior in the VIP section.

JAKE

Oh. I hope my outfit's okay?

DANIEL

It's...fine! We'll just say it's "day-camp irony nouveau."

CAMERON

Then again. We could queer it up...

EXT. "DICKSTUPID" WAREHOUSE BUILDING - AN HOUR LATER

CUT to Jake, now in heavy mascara. An entire sleeve of his shirt has been torn off. His Afro is scrunched in a tall bun.

He trails Preston, who follows Cameron, Daniel and Timmi as they stomp past a LONG LINE of gay men outside a warehouse building. They approach a DOOR BOUNCER (40s, large, black).

DANIEL

The name's "Daniel Plus Four."

Without questioning, the bouncer lets all five of them through, stamping their forearms on the way in.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The boys enter. This party is VAST. Dark, loud, foggy -- far more raw than the other gay establishments we've seen.

CAMERON

Welcome to DickStupid...

Slow-motion CLOSE-UP shots of Cameron, Daniel, Timmi and Preston looking seductively at guys around the club.

In between, we cut to the men exchanging looks with them: an older rugged BEAR; a young luminescent TWINK; a GO-GO BOY in leather thong; a shaved GENDER-QUEER individual with a pronounced jawline and huge diamond earrings.

Then, a close-up shot of Jake, rubbing his eyes, watering with the makeup Cameron put on.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" DANCEFLOOR - A BIT LATER

The boys, now holding drinks, arrive at the dancefloor. There, they run into Sal. (All dialogue is club-shouted!)

SAL

Hey girls! Refreshments?!

Sal passes a TINY UNMARKED BOTTLE of liquid to Timmi, who offers it to Jake. As Jake's about to drink it as a shot...

TIMMI

Don't drink! These are poppers!

Timmi takes the bottle back from Jake. He opens it, puts it close to his nostril, SNIFFS. He then hands it to Daniel, who does the same. Then Cameron. Then Preston. Jake is surprised.

JAKE

Are poppers like...liquid cocaine?!

CAMERON

No! Medicine for gay sex. And the best 90 seconds you'll ever spend on a dancefloor! No side effects!

Jake shrugs, not seeing the harm. He WHIFFS the smell-drug.

SAL

Except for destroying brain cells!
I think I read that on a podcast!

Jake regrets it for a moment while the others dance, enjoying themselves. Until, quickly, dancing is VERY fun for him too.

JAKE

Peeb! Peeb! This is awesome!

Preston nods. They start dance-hugging. Sal raises eyebrows to the others, mouthing, "*They fucking?*" The others aggressively shake heads: "*God no.*"

JAKE (CONT'D)

Dude! Remember first grade? When we were we dressed up like Cogsworth and Lumière?!

PRESTON

Yeah?! What about it?!

JAKE

Dunno! But now we're in N-Y-C! And we're together! Let's get drunker!

Preston laughs. But at that moment, he also spots a familiar face: it's the hot SERVER from his sister's engagement party.

PRESTON

I think I'm gonna stay here!

JAKE

No! Come with!

PRESTON

Why don't you get me a drink?!

Preston hands Jake two \$20 bills. Jake shrugs. Too giddy!

JAKE

You got it, dude! Unless I find a female who wants to be my G-F!

Jake dances his way toward the bar. Preston smiles, until he notices the baffled look on Timmi's face.

TIMMI
G-F? Like...gluten-free?

INT. "DICKSTUPID" BAR - A BIT LATER

Jake waits for drinks with Sal, at the bar. Jake looks back at Preston, vogue-ing gleefully on the dancefloor.

JAKE
Preston never dances like that!

SAL
You shoulda seen him last Saturday!
His pussy was on the floor!

JAKE
Do you mean Friday night?! He
stayed in last Saturday night!

SAL
Several lines of cocaine and I beg
to differ!

Jake looks back at Preston, less admiringly this time.

SAL (CONT'D)
We love Preston! It's taken forever
to find the right kind of black
friend for us! Inclusivity, right?!

Jake nods, puzzled. He sees Cameron hug Preston before taking off for the VIP area with Timmi and Daniel. Preston stays.

SAL (CONT'D)
I'm gonna find an escaped Mennonite
who wants to sit on my face! Byeee!

Sal takes off as Jake's two drinks arrive at the bar. Jake grabs both. Looking around, he spots a goth woman. He nods at her: "sup?" She shakes her head. He still approaches, smooth:

JAKE
Got a fetish for straight guys?!

He holds up one of the drinks for her. She, in turn, holds up a Post-It, which reads: **DIDN'T COME TO BE HARASSED**. She then grabs both drinks from Jake and storms off.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" DANCEFLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Preston inches to the hot server. They make focused eye contact. Until the guy introduces himself as RAF.

RAF

I'm Raf! How do I know you?!

PRESTON

I'm Preston! I was at a party you catered on Long Island last week!

RAF

Right! Those fancy people! So uppity! How did you know them?!

PRESTON

Oh, just...family friends!

RAF

Well, fancy boy! You're gorgeous!

PRESTON

Sorry, I can't hear you! What?!

RAF

I said you're deaf!

Raf smiles. Then, he leans in to KISS Preston. After a beat, Preston leans out, stunned. But before he can think of any excuse not to, Preston leans back in. He kisses Raf again.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" VIP AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Jake, now more drunk, looks for Preston. He can't find him. But, oh! He spots Daniel, Cameron and Timmi in the roped-off VIP area. Jake waves, excited. They wave back, unexcited.

Jake walks right up to the area, where a VIP BOUNCER (white, ripped, stylish) stops him. He points to the sign: **VIP ONLY**.

JAKE

Jake LaPorte! I'm on the list!

VIP BOUNCER

This is VIP. Celebrities and Andy Cohen come here. Can I see I-D?

JAKE

Oh. I...lost it! But don't worry!

Jake shows his forearm stamp he got on the way in. It reads: **DICKSTUPID: OVER 21 / OVER *IT***

VIP BOUNCER

Yet you can't verify being a VIP, 21, or over it? How did you sneak in here, kid?

JAKE

Sneak in? No, I'm with that guy!
Daniel, um...Plus-Four!

VIP BOUNCER

(turning to Daniel)

Daniel! You with this child? 'Cause
if you are, you can't stay up here!

Daniel gets sudden judgmental looks from older VIPs. Then, an innocent, pleading look from Jake. Daniel seems torn.

DANIEL

I, uh...have...no idea who that is!

The VIPs look relieved. As the bouncer turns back to Jake, Daniel mouths, "*I'm so sorry, I'm the worst!*" and mimes being hung on a cross. Jake, annoyed, responds to the bouncer.

JAKE

Fine, whatever! I'll stay away from
this dumb-ass VIP area!

VIP BOUNCER

"VIP area?" Listen, Teenage Mutant
Cargo-Turtle. You better leave this
entire club before I call security.

JAKE

WHAT?! No, I need my friend, he's --

VIP BOUNCER

Care to point out your little
boyfriend so we can remove him too?

Jake looks to the floor, where he now sees Preston. Kissing Raf. Preston looks unfamiliarly happy, desirous, desired. Jake, blank expression, doesn't point to Preston, or his man.

JAKE

I don't see him. I'll just go.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" DANCEFLOOR - A MOMENT LATER

Back on the floor, Preston emerges from a kiss with Raf.

PRESTON

Want me to get us VIP drinks?

RAF

VIP? Sure, fancy boy!

PRESTON

I promise I'm not that fancy! It's just, my friend's up there, and --

Raf kisses Preston, shutting him up. Then clutches his face.

RAF

Give me your number! In case you can't find me later!

PRESTON

There's no service in here! I promise I'll be back, okay?

Preston kisses him again. Then smiles, nods, and takes off.

INT. "DICKSTUPID" VIP AREA - CONTINUOUS

Preston walks up to the bouncer who kicked Jake out. He gets in without any trouble, then walks up to Cameron, Daniel, Timmi, now with Sal. They dance among the older VIP crowd.

DANIEL

There you are! This night is amaze! I'm gonna get like seven promotions by the time I black in.

CAMERON

Whose face have you been sucking?!

PRESTON

Oh! A guy I met last week! At my sister's engagement party!

SAL

Your sister's fiancé is gay?! Hot!

PRESTON

What?! No! Anyway, where is Jake?!

TIMMI

Jake?! Oh, right! Jake! The bouncer carded him and asked him to leave!

There's a sudden look of horror on Preston's face.

DANIEL

I felt so bad! Let me know where I can send him an Edible Arrangement.

PRESTON

Jake got kicked out?! Is he okay?!

Preston looks at his phone. No texts. No service. And, after barely a moment, no battery.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

This fucking battery! FUCK! I need to go find him!

Sensing Preston's freak-out, Cameron pulls him aside.

CAMERON

Babe? Calm! Jake's better off! This place isn't for him! It's for you! And that hot man, who wants to have sex with you! Okay?! Don't hold yourself back for some...pen-pal!

PRESTON

Pen-pal?! No! I can't leave Jake out there! He's gonna hate me!

Preston bolts out of the VIP area. His friends don't stop him, but they also don't join.

As Preston heads to the exit, Raf notices him leaving. He looks at his phone, disappointed to not have that number.

EXT. "DICKSTUPID" WAREHOUSE BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Panicked, Preston stumbles outside. Runs up the street. The line is still huge, but no sign of Jake. Preston hails a cab.

EXT. FLATIRON DISTRICT STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Preston jumps out of the cab outside his building. No Jake.

He runs up his block. Then, as Preston paces by a 99¢ pizza joint, he stops. In the WINDOW, he sees Jake, sitting alone.

INT. 99¢ PIZZA JOINT - CONTINUOUS

Preston slowly enters the pizza joint. He sits down across from Jake. Jake glares at him. Blankly. Neither says hello.

PRESTON

Did you...order a niçoise salad? At a 99-cent pizza joint?

We see Jake's paper plate: stale, browning romaine lettuce, black olive rounds, and a cylinder of canned tuna on it.

JAKE

A man in a corset tonight told me I should lay off cheese for a while.

PRESTON

Look, man. I get you're probably pissed that I --

JAKE

That you had to babysit me in front of all your very important people?

PRESTON

Okay. I get it. You're mad.

JAKE

I'm not mad. I was. I mean, I hated tonight. And then, on my way out, you were kissing that guy...

PRESTON

I shouldn't have left you to --

JAKE

Shut up. I saw you with him, and it was like: "Oh shit. I've never seen P.B. mack on a dude." But it was also like: Oh. Shit. I've never seen P.B. that...relaxed.

PRESTON

I definitely wasn't relaxed.

JAKE

Normal, then. Normal. Just a person liking...kissing another person -- while, I dunno, songs are playing.

Preston cracks a half-smile. Jake continues on, bittersweet.

JAKE (CONT'D)

And your friends don't have to like me. And I don't have to like them. But if they -- that -- makes you feel normal? Then it's whatever. As long as we can keep us...us.

A pause. Preston registers all that Jake's just said.

PRESTON

Well. That guy tonight was hot. But know who else is hot? Khadijah's upstairs doctor-neighbor in the *Living Single* we about to watch.

JAKE

The brother from *Best Man Holiday*?

PRESTON

Mm-hmm! Brother's fine in *The Best Man Holiday*.

They ease up. Laugh. Back to regularly scheduled banter.

INT. CHELSEA GYM - NIGHT

Two nights later, Preston walks with Cameron through the gym.

CAMERON

Oh, Saturday night? Ended on a roof pool with some fugly models.

PRESTON

Sorry again that I stormed.

CAMERON

No, I'm sorry. About your friend. But mainly that you missed out on that hot caterer's number!

PRESTON

Same. But I've run into him twice, so maybe I'll see him again.

CAMERON

Don't keep yourself chaste, though, for summer ramp-eth up. Are you free for Bastille Day?

PRESTON

French Independence Day? Should be.

CAMERON

I got us invited to a huge gay party in the Hamptons. And Daniel secured an Airbnb so we can make a full Balsamic weekend out of it.

PRESTON

Definitely won't miss that.

CAMERON

Good. And until then, clear your schedule for every night this week.

Preston's eyes widen. Deep breath. And then, we enter a **MONTAGE** showing his and Jake's respective weeknights...

INT. CAMERON'S LIVING ROOM / INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN

"Just Friends" by Amy Winehouse plays as we CUT between Cameron's living room -- BALSAMICS having fun -- and Jake's, where he is alone, eating, on his laptop checking Instagram.

In each frame, outfits change (Balsamics in stylish going-out clothes, Jake in tees and shorts) to mark passage of time.

BALSAMICS: Drinking shots and vogue-ing before going out.

JAKE: Eats a Lean Cuisine meal. On Instagram, we see a photo Jake posted with Preston that weekend. New NOTIFICATION: Preston LIKED the photo. Jake smiles.

BALSAMICS: Returning drunk, after a different night out.

JAKE: Drinks Fresca. On Instagram, he clicks LIKE on a new sketch Alyssa posted.

BALSAMICS: Drinking cocktails, watching *RuPaul's Drag Race*.

JAKE: Eats peanut butter toast. On Instagram, his black classmate Erika kissing her boyfriend.

BALSAMICS: Sal cuts himself a HUGE line of cocaine. Daniel tap his shoulder, judgmental. Sal rolls his eyes, then divides the line of cocaine into five.

JAKE: Eats ice cream. On Instagram, a pic Preston's posted with his gay friends. Jake looks at it, annoyed. He hovers over the LIKE button. Click? Click. Reluctantly.

BALSAMICS: All five drunk in brightly-colored wigs. Timmi pulls back Sal's yellow wig as he vomits into a marble vase.

INT. CLEO'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The next week, Jake sits on the couch in Cleo's living room while she goes through photos, one by one. He takes notes.

CLEO

This is my sister Barbara, back when we lived in Ohio. I already explained what Ohio is, didn't I?

JAKE

Cleo? It might save time if I can scan photos while you explain them.

CLEO

Then how on earth are you supposed
to take notes at the same time?

As Cleo scowls, a PING on Jake's phone. His face lights up.
TEXT from **Alyssa: Any chance you can do me a HUGE favor?**

INT. IKEA PARKING LOT - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Jake and Alyssa carry a heavy box from IKEA to his car.

ALYSSA

Thanks again for the hand. I had no
idea you loved IKEA so much.

JAKE

Duh! Swedish people are like the
Aryan race -- but instead of hating
on Jews, they were like, "Yo. Let's
help them build kitchen islands."

Alyssa laughs as they open the trunk to put the box in.

JAKE (CONT'D)

So, um. Think you can make it to my
birthday party on July 8th?

ALYSSA

Yeah! Is it weird if Erin comes?
Since Hollis like...dissed her?

JAKE

No! She totally should! And trust
me, P.B. didn't want to diss her.
He's just...he wouldn't diss a fly.

ALYSSA

Aww. That's sweet? I, however, say
flies are ugly as fuck.

Jake laughs as he shuts the trunk.

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - MORNING

Preston, at the desk with nothing to do, is on Google.

He searches: **raf catering guy**. Then: **caterers named raf in
long island or nyc**. Then: **catering raf, gay, earrings, hot**.

Stewart wheels his desk chair up next to him.

STEWART

Yo! I know you missed the first three games, but you're still in for team jerseys, right? They're gonna say, get this: "Kick-shaw."

Preston, in an unusually confident, matter-of-fact moment:

PRESTON

Look, I'm gonna be honest. I don't enjoy playing team sports.

STEWART

Really? No hoop dreams?

PRESTON

None. I think people should sell candy on subways to support tall black kids who hate basketball.

Stewart, stunned by this self-assuredness, wheels away.

Preston turns back to his computer. A new e-mail has just popped up. Its title: **YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED...**

He opens a Paperless Post, with the header: **BASTILLE day GAY.** As Preston reads the text, we hear an American man's voice:

INVITATION (V.O.)

Garçons -- it seems July is upon us, and that means one thing: we are not celebrating America.

Instead, save your red, white and blues for a rich gay celebration of rich gay France.

Hot friends and Bel Amis welcome to the Hamptons for top-shelf liquor, top-shelf bottoms, Parisian techno, *couture* shirtless-ness, a sex mime, and motherfucking liberty.

Preston gulps, excited. Until:

CAMERON'S VOICE

Allons enfants de la party of the summer. July 8th.

A look of PANIC on Preston's face. He checks his calendar. On July 8th, sure enough: **JAKE'S 21st BDAY PARTY.** Fuck.

INT. CHELSEA ART GALLERY - NIGHT

Preston, Cameron, Daniel and Timmi stand together at a crowded art gallery, plastic wine glasses in hand.

CAMERON

What do you mean you can't go? You said you'd be in for the weekend!

PRESTON

Yeah, but I assumed the Bastille Day party was on July 14th.

DANIEL

No! The hosts go to Ethiopia on the 12th, to adopt a baby or something.

TIMMI

Meaning the weekend before will be epically naughty. 1pm 'til sunrise.

PRESTON

I'm sorry! I really have to be in Huntington that Saturday night for my friend Jake's birthday party.

DANIEL

Aw. He having it at Chuk-E-Cheez?

CAMERON

Look, both are on Long Island. So: take Friday off, limo-bus with us for a Montauk night, make an early French cameo so we can all pose for photos -- a must -- then do Jake's for a hot ninety, then come back for more Bastille debauchery. Okay? C'est la only fucking option.

INT. PRESTON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Preston is on his laptop. Another FaceTime call with Jake.

On his TV screen, we see a scene between the two male roommates on *LIVING SINGLE*, the suave businessman Kyle (T.C. Carson) and the lovable handyman Overton (John Henton).

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - CONTINUOUS

Jake is on the other end of this FaceTime call, with the same *LIVING SINGLE* scene cued up on his TV. Intercut with Preston.

JAKE

Dude, we're still just like Kyle and Overton from *Living Single*. I'm the lovable folksy romantic. You're a type-A professional with all that European flare. Don't you think?

Preston seems unconvinced. Besides, his mind is elsewhere.

PRESTON

Oh, hey. Just wanted to check. Your party is still on July 8th, right?

JAKE

A-K-A my date of birth! Get ready, dude. Mom just ordered a keg!

PRESTON

Gotcha. 'Cause I just realized that's the same day as this other thing I stupidly said I'd go to.

Jake suddenly becomes sullen. Preston tries to play it cool.

JAKE

Oh. You're...ditching my birthday?

PRESTON

No! No. The other thing's a daytime party, on Long Island. I was just checking your date to make sure I should take off work that Friday to stay at some Airbnb thing. Which would mean I definitely, two-hundo percent can get to your party.

JAKE

Uh huh. Well. You know Huntington's not that close to Fire Island.

PRESTON

Don't worry! It's not in Fire Island! It's in the Hamptons.

INT. CLEO'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cleo is in the middle of more long-winded photo explanations. She seems slightly more comfortable with Jake.

CLEO

And here's Lester, the one who sold insurance to Harry Belafonte, wearing a green tie...

(MORE)

CLEO (CONT'D)
 (next photo)
 And here's Lester, the one who sold
 insurance to Harry Belafonte,
 wearing a red tie...

Jake, taking notes, looks both bored and agitated.

CLEO (CONT'D)
 And here's Lester's cousin Cy, who
 became a homosexual in 1971. Oooh,
 Lester was mad when that happened!
 Almost stopped selling insurance.

JAKE
 Was Lester mad because Cy started
 acting and dressing differently?
 And then stopped hanging out with
 Lester? To spend all his time with
 richer, better-looking gay cousins?

Cleo is stunned by this angry flare-up from Jake.

CLEO
 No. Lester was mad because Lester
 was a homo-phobic. You're...not a
 homo-phobic, are you?

JAKE
 What?! No! My best friend is...
 (realizing he can't say)
 ...friends with a gay person.

CLEO
 Okay. And you're not secretly in
 love with that person, are you?

JAKE
 What?! No!

INT. RICKSHAW KITCHEN PANTRY - DAY

Preston, spotting Baskin in the kitchen pantry, gets up from
 his desk to fill up a coffee next to him.

BASKIN
 Preston! How's the family?

PRESTON
 They're good! Oh, except. Actually?
 My grandma is...not well. Had a
 fall. In fact, she's having hip
 surgery next Friday.

(MORE)

PRESTON (CONT'D)

She wanted me to be there, but I told her I had to work, of course.

Preston's twisted story works on Baskin, pitying him.

BASKIN

Absolutely be there for it. I'm sorry, pal. Take Friday! I'll email your dad to express my sympathy.

PRESTON

Oh, maybe don't, actually. He's a bit touchy about it all.

BASKIN

Right. I know from Pebble Beach how he gets about showing weakness!

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER BEDROOM - MORNING

Preston packs new designer underwear in a bag. From outside, he hears HONKING, fun shrieks, the French national anthem.

Peering out the window, he sees an SUV-STRETCH-LIMO. Daniel, Timmi and Cameron peer up at him, standing out of a sun roof.

CAMERON

Commuting is such a drag. No?

INT. PARTY LIMO - A BIT LATER

Inside the party limo, Cameron, Preston, Timmi and Daniel, are passing a bottle of Grey Goose around, taking swigs.

TIMMI

Okay: Four gals. Hamptons weekend. Which Sex and the City ladies are we? I say Cameron is tall Carrie. Daniel's short Miranda.

DANIEL

Proud of it, you Y-chromosome Samantha! I suppose that means Preston is black Charlotte.

PRESTON

Wait. One of them was black?

DANIEL

No. You're the black version of -- hold on a second! Have you never seen *Sex and the City*?

PRESTON
Never. Sorry...?

Gasps from Cameron, Daniel and Timmi. Much horror and pity.

CAMERON
You grew up closeted, with older sisters, and didn't watch *Sex and the City*? How did you learn about being a single woman circa 1998?

PRESTON
I watched *Living Single*?

DANIEL
Living Single? What's that?

PRESTON
A comedy about three black women who live in New York City. And a fourth black woman who's a lawyer.

CAMERON
So it's black *Sex and the City*?

PRESTON
Not exactly. There were also two guys who are their neighbors, so --

TIMMI
So it's black *Friends*? It doesn't matter. Let's watch it tonight!

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - THAT AFTERNOON

Jake is scrolling through photos of Preston on Instagram.

NANCY (O.S.)
Jakey? We have to go to Costco!

He sees photos of the four Balsamic friends, all having fun on the beach in Montauk. Jake is visibly angered by this.

NANCY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
JAKY! COST! CO!

INT. COSTCO - A BIT LATER

Nancy and Jake are buying bulk items for Jake's party.

NANCY
Is P.B. on Long Island yet?

JAKE
(mocking fancy voice)
Yep. But he's in Montauk.

NANCY
Honey? Has there been weirdness
between you and P.B. this summer? I
didn't want to pry, but seems like
things have kind of...changed?

JAKE
If I tell you something, can you
promise to not tell his parents?

NANCY
Of course. Therapist-son
confidentiality.

JAKE
Well. He came out. Like, came out.

NANCY
Wow! Good for him! I mean, I always
figured he might be. I'm guessing
you did too, right?

Jake disregards this question. His tone gets whiny.

JAKE
Anyway. Ever since he told me, he's
been so...superficial. Like, he now
diets? And works out all the time?

NANCY
Maybe he now cares how he looks to
potential sexual partners. Which he
never had to in the closet.

JAKE
But...no! 'Cause he also now spends
all his time with other superficial
guys. And they like, go out as a
group! And have weird inside jokes!

NANCY
Honey? Sounds like he's just having
a typical, positive gay experience.
(beat)
You're not a homophobe, are you?

JAKE
What? No!

NANCY

Good. And...you're not secretly in love with Preston, are you?

JAKE

NO!

NANCY

Okay! Okay! Just asking...

INT. MONTAUK AIRBNB LIVING ROOM - THAT NIGHT

A Montauk Airbnb after sundown. On a dining table are empty tequila bottles, half-empty plates of sushi. We hear...

LIVING SINGLE THEME SONG (O.S.)

*We are living...single!
Ooo, and in a '90s kinda world,
I'm glad I got my GIRLS!*

Preston, Daniel, Timmi and Cameron stretch out on couches. On the TV, they watch the opening credits for *LIVING SINGLE*.

DANIEL

Queen Latifah? She acted in a T.V. show before she was in *Chicago*?

PRESTON

Yeah. But this was after she was already a hip-hop star.

TIMMI

Queen Latifah was a hip-hop star?

CAMERON

Shut up. This looks fun!

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Jake wakes up, expressionless. He looks at his phone. There's an Instagram notification. He's been tagged in a post.

He opens it: Preston has posted a photo of Jake and Preston, at age five. They are in costume, respectively, as the clock and candelabra from Disney's *BEAUTY AND THE BEAST*.

The Instagram caption reads: **"HAPPY BDAY to BFF and OG @jakelaporte...forever the #cogsworth to my #lumière"**

Jake snorts. He lets out an uncontrollably happy smile.

INT. MONTAUK AIRBNB BATHROOM - LATER THAT MORNING

Preston is applying moisturizer in a bathroom mirror. PING.
He gets a TEXT on his phone.

From **Jake**: <3 the pic, bro. You an UGLY-ASS enchanted clock!

Preston laughs. Smiles. He types two TEXTS back...

One reads: **Fuck off, dude.**

The next reads: **KIDDING! HAPPY BDAY! CAN'T WAIT FOR TONIGHT.**

INT. MONTAUK AIRBNB LIVING ROOM - A MOMENT LATER

Preston walks into the living room. Cameron, Daniel and Timmi are lying on the couch, still watching *Living Single*.

PRESTON

Doesn't the party start at 1?

DANIEL

Yeah, but nobody who isn't trash shows up on time.

TIMMI

Besides, I need more *Living Single*!

CAMERON

While you were in the bathroom we decided you're the Khadijah in our group. Type A diva, but not bitchy than Daniel. He's obviously Maxine. I'm Régine. Timmi's Synclaire.

PRESTON

So I'm the Queen Latifah? Huh. My friend always said I'm like Kyle.

CAMERON

Honestly? Kyle? A straight man?

DANIEL

Wow, definitely not.

TIMMI

That's so cruel.

PRESTON

Well, I should leave Bastille Gay by 4, so...let's get ready soon?

DANIEL

Ugh. Fine! But that right there?
Total Khadijah move.

The other boys snap in agreement.

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY ENTRANCE - EARLY AFTERNOON

In slow motion, the boys stomp up to a huge Hamptons house. We close up on their respective Bastille Day looks:

- PRESTON: black-striped muscle tee, red neckerchief, beret
- DANIEL: a crop top that reads **JE FUCKS WITH SAINT-TROPEZ**
- CAMERON: floor-length kaftan colored like the French flag
- TIMMI: the word **Dior** painted in gold on his shirtless chest

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

The boys step into a poolside backyard, rosé glasses in hand. We see a hot-tub, a DJ on stage, French décor. Only a dozen or so older gay men stand around. It's nothing wild.

PRESTON

This is...nice!

DANIEL

I didn't custom-bleach my hole for "nice." We were promised epic.

The guys all look dismayed. Except for Preston, who seems fairly relieved as he looks at his watch.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Nancy pours Fritos into a bowl as Jake eats raw celery. From the window, he notices a woman and 5-year-old boy approach.

JAKE

Mom? Why's your friend Rivkah walking here right before my party?

NANCY

I invited her if that's okay! She's been lonely since the divorce.

JAKE

And why is she with a tiny person?

NANCY

She's got her son Joshy this weekend. But don't worry. They won't disturb you or your friends!

Jake shoots his mom a whiny look.

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

The Hamptons party is now slightly more crowded, but still not crazy. The boys are talking amongst themselves.

TIMMI

What?! But Tintin was hot and gay!

DANIEL

So? You know my type. It's kill Tintin. Marry Babar. Fuck Muzzy.

PRESTON

On that disturbing note, I think it's time for me to head out.

TIMMI

But hot people are only just getting here! Come on, can't you stay one more hour?!

And then, Preston notices a familiar face arrive: it's Raf.

PRESTON

Yeah. I could probably swing that.

EXT. JAKE'S BACKYARD - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

Two kids run around Jake's yard while Nancy and three friends sit around drinking wine. Rap music blasts. Jake stands by himself, testing the keg as he pours himself a beer.

Then, Alyssa and Erin walk in. Jake greets them, anxious.

JAKE

Alyssa! Erin! Hey -- you've beat most of the crowd here.

ALYSSA

Is this some Jewish lady mixer? Because my mom will have FOMO.

JAKE

Ha! No. I just...worry about my mom getting lonely, y'know? So I was like, sup! Mom! Invite yo friends!

ERIN

Wow, Jake. Alyssa says you can't be as nice as you --

ALYSSA

Erin?! Shut up!

Alyssa hits her arm, embarrassed. Erin realizes she's stepped in something. Jake smiles and silently sips his beer-foam.

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - EARLY EVENING

The party is now crowded. An Édith Piaf remix plays as boys dance-sway, eyeing their options. Preston glances over the crowd to Raf, who is talking to other friends.

Then, MUSIC STOPS. On stage, a man dressed like SEXY NAPOLEON shouts in a fake French accent. All eyes turn to him.

SEXY NAPOLEON

ATTENTION! We must pause *zis fête* now for a *petit* lesson *d'histoire*. However, I need a volunteer who speaks French. Surely one of you *homosexuels* studied abroad *à Paris*?

TIMMI

He did! Preston studied *à* there!

Timmi lifts Preston's arm. All eyes turn to him.

SEXY NAPOLEON

Bien! Can you please come inside ze house to prepare, *pour un moment*?

CAMERON

Yes! He can!

Preston glares at his friends as the crowd begins clapping. He then looks over to Raf, who cheers too, egging him on.

SEXY NAPOLEON

Into ze house! Don't be shy...

Two shirtless men in Revolution-era trousers take Preston by each arm. Fine. He finally yields. Once they walk him inside the house, Sexy Napoleon addresses the crowd again.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Monsieurs et Monsieurs! We are gazzered here to celebrate ze independence of France. Ze Storming of ze Bastille. Mariah Carey's album, *Ze Emacipation of Mimi*...

Laughs from the crowd at this cultural in-joke.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

But before we rip off our *culottes*, we must punish those who punish us.

(MORE)

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
Oppress those who oppressed us. But
who in zis 1789 French kingdom, I
ask you, is our enemy?

A man in the crowd calls out.

CROWD MAN
Um. Marie Antoinette?

SEXY NAPOLEON
Mais oui! Marie Antoinette! Queen
of Versailles! She who scorned us.
Mocked us. Who upon learning of our
suffering, shouted: "Let zem eat
cake!" *Hohn*. Imagine. Telling a
nation of closeted *homosexuels* to
eat *les dense simple carbohydrates!*

More laughs from the crowd.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
So! Before our true celebration can
begin...we must take down zis
oppressive monarch. And zis is why,
monsieurs et monsieurs, it is time.
To bring out...*MARIE ANTOINETTE!*

House doors SWING open. There is PRESTON: hands tied, mouth
duct-taped, dressed WIG-TO-TOE in a FULL extravagant MARIE
ANTOINETTE COSTUME. The crowd gasps, cheers, laughs, jeers.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
Très belle! Guards! Bring forward
ze evil queen for her trial!

The shirtless escorts DRAG Preston to the stage and sit him
on a THRONE. They RIP the duct tape off his mouth and begin
applying lipstick and blush to his face. The crowd loves it.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)
Her majesty! Do you confess you are
Marie Antoinette, Queen of *France*?

Preston doesn't want to participate. He looks out at Timmi,
Cameron and Daniel. Their eyes widen, delighted. Come on.

PRESTON
Um...yes?

SEXY NAPOLEON
En Français! Do you confess you are
ze wife of King Louis *Seize*?

PRESTON

...Oui?

SEXY NAPOLEON

Louder! Please! Do you confess to sins of living too extravaqantly?

This is miserable for Preston. Excruciating.

PRESTON

...Oui.

SEXY NAPOLEON

LOUDER! And do you confess, your majesty, to forsaking your people?

He looks at a crowd of strangers. Gay. Rich. Nearly all white. And this time, his response comes out as a SHOUT.

PRESTON

OUI!

Quiet. Sexy Napoleon shakes his head. *Tsk-tsk-tsk*. For shame.

SEXY NAPOLEON

Well. Since her majesty confesses to the sins of a life too fabulous? We must...now...sentence her...

A GUILLOTINE is wheeled out. The crowd GASPS. As the escorts stand Preston UP, he looks devastatingly terrified.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

...to chug a full bottle...of her nation's finest champagne!

The crowd cheers. A TWINK in a PERIOD BALLGOWN emerges with a BOTTLE of DOM PERIGNON. He bows, presenting it to Preston.

Preston's eyes widen. Relief beyond belief. He CLUTCHES the bottle. PRESSES it to his lips. CHUGS it in one long go. Yep.

The crowd goes WILD. Preston LIFTS the empty bottle. Triumph.

SEXY NAPOLEON (CONT'D)

Oui! And now zat you are absolved, please! Repeat ze motto of your people's independence: Liberté!

PRESTON

Liberté!

SEXY NAPOLEON

Égalité!

PRESTON

Égalité!

SEXY NAPOLEON

Fraternité!

PRESTON

Fraterni-motha-fuckin-GOD-DAMN-té!

Then, in his gown, Preston does it: DEATH DROP. Cheers ERUPT.

And then, suddenly: Confetti cannons BURST. Champagne bottles POP. Strobe lights FLASH. Techno music BLARE.

Preston stands up and looks over the crowd with dazzled amazement. The party of the summer has turned the fuck up.

EXT. JAKE'S BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Back at Jake's party. Barely a crowd. A few geeky-looking guys. Alyssa and Erin whisper in a corner. The two children bounce in a BOUNCY CASTLE. All seem bored. Jake looks bummed.

He checks his phone. Nothing. Nancy, tipsy, calls out.

NANCY

Jakey! Don't you want to go in the bouncy castle?

JAKE

No, mom. It's okay.

NANCY

He asks me to get him a bouncy castle? Now he doesn't want to go in the bouncy castle!

ALYSSA

I'll go in the bouncy castle!

Alyssa takes off her shoes and runs toward the bouncy castle.

JAKE

Okay, I mean, yeah -- I'll also go in the bouncy castle...

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - A BIT LATER

At the now-wild Hamptons party, Cameron, Daniel and Timmi pose for photos with Preston, still in Marie Antoinette drag.

TIMMI

How amazing did that feel?!

Preston grins, drunk on champagne and adrenaline. He looks at his watch: it's **6:48**. He then looks across the crowd at Raf, who waves at him, eyebrows raised.

PRESTON

Too amazing! I need...to sober up!
Think there's coffee here?!

DANIEL

You should take an Adderall!

PRESTON

No! No drugs today! I really have
to leave soon, for real!

CAMERON

Adderall's prescription, babe. Just
makes you sober and alert. I'm sure
Sal has some over there.

Preston drunkenly stumbles over to Sal, who shoves dollar bills into the thong of an almost-naked tightrope walker.

EXT. JAKE'S BACKYARD - DUSK

At Jake's party, Alyssa and Erinn stand with Nathaniel, Finn, and Adam (from the earlier house party). The boys all look at their phones, laughing, mocking something. Jake walks over.

JAKE

Sup bros. Whatcha lookin' at?

NATHANIEL

Dude! You never told us that P.B.
Hollis is a tranny.

Jake's attempt at cool and casual fade. He's confused.

JAKE

What? What are you talking about?

ALYSSA

Guys, you can't say that word!

FINN

Well, he's at least a drag queen.
And he's definitely a homo.

JAKE

Wait. Who told you that?

Finn passes his phone to Jake. On Instagram, there are photos of Preston, at his party, in his dress. Jake becomes sullen.

NATHANIEL

Read these captions! "Marie Blantoinette?" "Queen Latifah of Versailles?" Look at this one:

Jake's sad eyes drop to a group photo: Cameron, Daniel, Timmi and Preston. The caption reads: **we are LIVING SINGLE #besties #bffs #livingsingle #gay #ina90skindofworldimgladigetmygirls.**

NATHANIEL (CONT'D)

"We are LIVING SINGLE. Hashtag besties. Hashtag B-F-Fs. Hashtag living single. Hashtag GAY. Hashtag Ina? Ninety...Skin...Do-fworld...?"

JAKE

(interrupting, gloomy)
"In a '90s kind of world, I'm glad I got my girls."

Jake looks broken. Anything but that. Alyssa clocks his mood.

ALYSSA

Guys. Put that away. Hollis is probably gonna be here any minute.

NATHANIEL

Really? These are from minutes ago! And there's no hashtag latergram! Which means it has to be insta.

ADAM

Whoa. Like, "insta...gram!" Dude!

Adam and Nathaniel high-five. Jake, seething, passes the phone back to them. He paces back into the house.

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - A BIT LATER

Preston wades through the crowded crowd and approaches Raf.

PRESTON

Hey there!

RAF

Your royal highness! What happened to your "I'm not that fancy" story?

PRESTON

Okay, I guess I'm pretty fancy! And how are you doing, gorgeous?!

Preston, drunk, puts his hand on Raf's chest. Raf is uneasy.

RAF

I'm doing well! Definitely not as drunk as yourself...

PRESTON

No! I'm sobering up! Listen, I have to leave in a minute! But can I get your number?! I really regret not getting it last time!

RAF

Oh. Um, sure. But...

At that moment, JASON (black, 26, cute) comes up to Raf's side with two drinks. He kisses Raf on the cheek. Preston takes a step back, embarrassed.

RAF (CONT'D)

Jason! Meet Preston!

JASON

You mean the Queen of Versailles?!
(to Preston)
Enchantée! You are fucking divine!

PRESTON

Oh. Thanks. Raf, I didn't realize you, um -- how did you two meet?

JASON

At "DickStupid" the other week!

RAF

Yeah. That night, after we...spoke, I met Jason. And we've been hanging out ever since.

Jason hands Raf one of his glasses. They clink, then kiss.

PRESTON

Oh! That's cool! Yeah. Anyhow, Raf, I'm uh, really sorry for --

RAF

Don't apologize for anything, Preston. Have a safe night.

JASON

It was an honor, your highness!

Deflated, Preston stumbles away from Raf. Getting dizzier and dizzier in the crowd, he gets two new TEXTS on his phone.

One from **Jake: Fuck off, dude.**
And another from **Jake: Not kidding.**

And then, suddenly, his phone dies.

PRESTON

SHIT!

EXT. JAKE'S BACKYARD - MOMENTS LATER

The crowd finishes singing "Happy Birthday" as Nancy holds up a cake in front of Jake.

EVERYONE (SINGING)

"Happy birthday to you..."

Jake, furious, blows out the 21 candles. They light back up.

NANCY

Oops! Trick candles! Looks like you have to keep on wishing!

Jake, livid, keeps blowing the candles, which keep lighting back up. Nancy's friends laugh out loud. Jake's friends laugh to themselves. Nancy's friends' little kids look unimpressed.

EXT. BASTILLE PARTY BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Preston, drunk and upset, stumbles back to Timmi, Daniel and Cameron, now dancing with Sal.

PRESTON

You guys don't have a phone charger, do you?!

DANIEL

No! There's a charging station over there, but good luck getting past the Grindr hyenas.

We see a huge line waiting desperately for battery life.

PRESTON

Fuck!

TIMMI

Seems like somebody's vee thirsty
for that hot caterer's number!

PRESTON

No! He has a boyfriend! Who he met
after I left him at Dickstupid!
Fuck! Tonight is just...FUCK!

CAMERON

Whoa. Babe. Is everything okay?

PRESTON

No! I'm fucking drunk! In a fucking
gown! And my best friend knows I'm
the fucking worst. FUCK!

SAL

Jeez. I guess somebody's Molly
hasn't kicked in yet...

Preston's dizziness intensifies, angrily.

PRESTON

What? I didn't take Molly! I only
took the Adderall you gave me.

SAL

Yeah. And "Adderall" is my code for
MDMA. If you wanted Adderall, you
should have asked for Adderall.

PRESTON

Are you FUCKING serious?!

Preston CHARGES at Sal. Cameron pulls him back, aside. On the
verge of tears, Preston tries to vomit into his glass. None.

CAMERON

Preston? Friend. It's okay. You
just won't go to Jake's party.

PRESTON

That's not an option!

CAMERON

The last time you left a party for
Jake, you lost out on that caterer.
Is there any reason, other than
guilt, you even want to leave now?

PRESTON

I promised him! I promised him
things would stay normal with us!
He just...wants me to be normal!

Cameron puts his hands on Preston's shoulders and speaks the following with careful intention.

CAMERON

But Babe. You're not normal. We're
not normal. We didn't come out to
assure straight guys that we're
normal.

Something starts to sink in to Preston: Cameron's words? The liquor? The drugs? The music? All of it.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Because, you know what? Fuck
normal. We're better than normal.

All of it sinks in, more and more, louder and louder.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Commuting is a drag, Preston.
Wouldn't you rather just be here?

More. More. Louder. Louder.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Be here, friend. Be here. Be. Here.

Preston is now fully entranced, as enter a **SLOW-MO MONTAGE...**

Felix Da Housecat remix of Nina Simone's "Sinnerman" plays as we CUT between Preston, at his party, and Jake, at his.

PRESTON: In the backyard, he sees sweaty men laughing, dancing, swimming, drinking, touching.

JAKE: In the backyard, he sees Alyssa and friends checking phones and gesturing at the door, ready to leave.

PRESTON: He sees two men sensually kissing in a hot-tub.

JAKE: Inside his house, he sees his mom and Rivkah looking at baby pictures. They point to photos, then to Jake ("Awww!")

PRESTON: Inside the house, he joins a crowded dancefloor. He dances by himself, his MDMA trip fully kicking in.

JAKE: Inside his bedroom, he scrolls angrily through dozens of Instagram photos of Preston partying.

PRESTON: In that costume, he starts dancing more intensely. He rips off his wig, still dancing by himself.

JAKE: He walks over to his desk. He takes out a pen and paper from his drawer.

PRESTON: He starts dancing aggressively with a RANDOM GUY.

JAKE: He begins to write a handwritten letter. At the top, he writes: **Dear Mr. And Mrs. Hollis...**

PRESTON: He is now dancing aggressively with TWO RANDOM GUYS.

JAKE: Mid-sentence, he writes words such as **worried** and **recent behavior** and **Preston...**

PRESTON: He and the two other guys, all high, are passionately caressing each other's bodies while they dance.

JAKE: Mid-letter, he writes words such as **spending** and **nightlife** and **drugs...**

PRESTON: He takes a key bump of cocaine that one of the random guys is holding up to his nose.

JAKE: Mid-letter, he writes words such as **needs to confront** and **habits** and **sexuality...**

PRESTON: He lifts off the random guys' shirts. They, in turn, unbutton and lift down the top of his Marie Antoinette dress.

JAKE: At end of note, he writes: **Concerned, Jake LaPorte...**

PRESTON: He walks up the stairs with the two intimate strangers in hand.

JAKE: He walks down stairs with the sealed letter in hand.

PRESTON: He knocks on bedroom door to check its availability.

JAKE: He enters his kitchen and places his sealed letter in the **OUTGOING MAIL** bin.

PRESTON: He opens a door to a bedroom, kisses the two random guys, and enters with both of them.

JAKE: He opens the door to his refrigerator, fork in hand, and removes a full party-sized bowl of macaroni salad.

As the refrigerator door CLOSES on Jake's face, the "Sinnerman" remix ENDS and we FINISH the montage.

INT. BASTILLE PARTY BEDROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

Preston wakes up, confused, in bed next to the two unclothed guys. He sees CONDOMS on the floor next to his Antoinette gown. Oh. Right. He pulls out his phone: still dead.

PRESTON

Where the fuck are my clothes?

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - THAT SAME MORNING

Jake, groggy from a sleepless night, dumps his empty bowl of macaroni salad and a used fork into the sink.

As he passes his mail bins, he sees the envelope addressed to **Mr. and Mrs. Hollis**. He picks up the note. After considering it for a moment, he tosses it on a blue RECYCLING BIN, piled high with boxes and wrapping-paper scraps from his party.

INT. BASTILLE PARTY KITCHEN - A BIT LATER

Hungover in his Marie Antoinette dress -- sans wig -- Preston walks into a gorgeous but debauched kitchen. He opens drawers until he finds an iPhone charger.

Once Preston plugs the charger into the wall and powers it up, the screen begins flooding with TEXTS:

From **Balsamic Vinegar: Preston, where did you go?**

From **Balsamic Vinegar: Kween we are WORRIED.**

From **Balsamic Vinegar: Heading back to the house. Assume you went to Jake's?**

From **Nancy JakesMom: Where were u tonight? Jake seems pretty upset. Missed u! Xo**

PRESTON

Fuck.

He takes his phone and makes a call:

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Hi, I need to get a cab from Montauk to Huntington, Long Island.

(pause)

FOUR HUNDRED DOLLARS?

EXT. JAKE'S STREET - TWO HOURS LATER

Preston struggles to get his Antoinette gown out of the cab. He stumbles onto Jake's street, a lower-middle-class residential street in Huntington, Long Island.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Preston approaches Jake's door. Petrified. He knocks.

Jake opens. He is wearing a headband, sneakers, gym shorts, and a print t-shirt of SHAQ as a genie. Jake glares at Preston. Preston half-smiles, trying to diffuse tension.

PRESTON

Haven't seen that shirt in forever.

JAKE

(coldly)

I find it helps me jog.

PRESTON

You jog now? That's cool.

JAKE

Yes. I'm on a diet. And it's going very well, for your information.

Preston spots the giant macaroni salad bowl in the sink. Then, Jake BOLTS out the door, brushing past Preston.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Now if you'll excuse me, Kazaam and I need to get our steps in.

EXT. JAKE'S STREET - CONTINUOUS

Jake puts in earbuds as he starts RUNNING. He is not very fast. Even Preston, jogging in his large gown, can keep up.

PRESTON

Look, man. I'm sorry.

Jake pretends not to hear Preston. He angrily raps lyrics to Aaron Carter's "That's How I Beat Shaq" as he listens to it.

JAKE

(raps lyrics to himself)

*"Please Aaron, are you for real?
One-on-one with Shaquille O'Neal?"*

PRESTON
 Would you take off your headphones
 and talk to me? I said I'm sorry.

JAKE
 (to Preston)
 CAN'T HEAR YOU!
 (raps lyrics, angrier)
*I swear I'm telling you the facts,
 Cuz that's how I beat Shaq...*

PRESTON
JAKE! I SAID I'M SORRY!

Jake STOPS in place and RIPS the headphones from his ears.

JAKE
 Would you fucking STOP saying
 you're sorry? "Sorry!" "Sorry!"
 That's all you fucking EVER say!
 And you never fucking mean it.

Preston stops running too. They're now face to face.

PRESTON
 What do you mean I never mean it?

JAKE
 You don't mean anything! "I'm
 coming to the party." "I'll visit
 you at school." You lied about
 being straight for seventeen years,
 you've clearly had practice.

PRESTON
 Being in the closet isn't the same
 as lying. And I'm sorry if --

JAKE
 There! Again! As if "I'm sorry"
 gives you permission to do every
 selfish everything you want. Well,
 I guess it's worked! You always get
 every fucking thing you want...

Jake, on verge of tears, starts RUNNING again, this time in
 the opposite direction. Preston, now irked, follows.

PRESTON
 Since when do you know what I want?

JAKE
 (rapping lyrics again)
*"A 3-pointer, nothing but net!
 Come on Shaq! Had enough yet?"*

PRESTON
 Has it occurred to you that the
 whole time we were growing up, you
 never bothered to actually know me?

Jake STOPS in place again. So does Preston.

JAKE
 Oh. And I suppose your new friends
 know you? Some rich anorexic coke-
 heads? Who only hang out with you
 because they want a black friend?

Jake starts RUNNING, again, back in the original direction.
 Preston, now even more irked, follows again.

PRESTON
They only want a black friend? Well
 that's pretty fucking hypocritical.

Jake STOPS again. So does Preston.

JAKE
 And what the fuck does that mean?

PRESTON
 I get your dad wasn't around, Jake,
 but I don't just exist to help you
 prove you're actually black.

Jake is now fully angry.

JAKE
 I am black. Motherfucker. More than
 your fucking garden-party family.
 So don't talk to me about struggle.

Preston stops shouting. He shakes his head in disbelief.

PRESTON
 Why don't you stop feeling so sorry
 for yourself?

JAKE
 Why don't you stop feeling so sorry
 for yourself?

Preston, annoyed by Jake's immature shout-back...

PRESTON

When are you gonna stop acting like
such a child?

And then...

JAKE

When are you gonna stop acting like
such a faggot?

That word. It lands on Preston like dirt on a coffin.

On Jake's face, we can see that he immediately regrets saying it. But before he can get another word out...

PUNCH. Preston's fist HITS Jake, square in the face. And...

THUD. Jake FALLS to the pavement. He pants. Winded. In pain.

Preston looks around. Not sure what he's done. He sees several NEIGHBORS who have watched the entire scene: a WHITE MOTHER covers her son's eyes; an older WHITE MAN dials a number into his phone; and a WHITE HOUSEWIFE, half-hidden behind a bush, holds her phone up, video-recording them.

Upon seeing these strangers, Preston doesn't say another word to Jake. Doesn't shout. Doesn't say sorry. He just RUNS...

EXT. HUNTINGTON TRAIN STATION - LATER

Preston has been running for several miles. Panting, he finally arrives at the Huntington train station.

Upon reaching the steps of the platform, he lifts his Marie Antoinette dress for his feet. However, he MISSTEPS and...

THUD. Preston FALLS face-first on the stairs. He touches his mouth, BLEEDING the same red as his lipstick. Fuck.

INT. LONG ISLAND RAILROAD TRAIN - A BIT LATER

Punch. Punch. We see a RAILROAD EMPLOYEE collecting tickets.

ELECTRONIC TRAIN ANNOUNCEMENT

This is the train to: Penn Station!

Preston, bruised with smudged makeup, sits alone in a four-seat booth, spreading out in his gown. A guy reading a porn magazine gives judgmental looks. Preston doesn't care today.

Preston just stares out the window as we begin a MONTAGE of the rest of this evening for him and Jake:

Kylie Minogue's weirdly sad, downbeat cover of her dance hit "Come Into My World" plays as we follow the two hurt friends.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - THAT NIGHT

Jake sits in the kitchen as Nancy, panicked, ices his face.

INT. PRESTON'S BATHROOM - SAME NIGHT

In the mirror, Preston removes the makeup he's had on for 24 hours. He then applies new makeup to cover bruises.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake is on his Facebook page. With a fully depressed look, he types: **Thanks for the birthday wishes, yo!** He posts it, sad.

INT. PRESTON'S BATHROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Preston, in workout clothes, tries to will himself to do push-ups. He's haggard. After three, he fucking gives up.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Jake sits with leftover cake. He scrapes off frosting that reads **HAPPY BIRTHDAY JAKE!** He then eats the cake beneath.

INT. 99¢ PIZZA JOINT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Preston, in the 99¢ pizza parlor around his corner, sits alone at a table. He's eating a full pizza by himself. His first in a long time. He binges its old, familiar taste.

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - MORNING

Next morning. Preston walks shyly to his desk, hoping his bruises won't be noticed. Stewart notices.

STEWART

Rough weekend?

PRESTON

Oh, um...yeah, I guess.

STEWART

Did your grandma's hip surgery
happen on your face?

Stewart's remark suggests he's onto Preston, who doesn't respond. He just sits down and turns on his computer.

INT. JAKE'S BEDROOM - THAT MORNING

Jake is lying in bed, staring blankly at a YouTube video:
Michelle Kwan: 2002 Olympic Exhibition.

ON SCREEN: Michelle Kwan's exhibition performance in Salt Lake City, after she lost the gold medal a second time. Kwan skates in a gold dress. Tears stream down her face.

SKATING COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Tears of joy. Tears of sadness.
More than a little irony as she
skated to "Fields of Gold."

An empty look on Jake's face. Then, suddenly, a PING on his phone. As he looks at it, his empty look turns horrified.

JAKE

No. Fucking. Way...

INT. RICKSHAW INTERN CUBICLE - LATER THAT MORNING

From his desk, Preston notices interns WHISPERING in the pantry while looking his way. Assuming his face is worse than he thought, Preston checks his scars with his phone camera.

But then he notices other employees LOOKING at him. WHISPERING about him. POINTING to their computers, then to him. Preston also notices Stewart in Baskin's office.

The sound of whispers grows louder in Preston's head. Louder. Louder. Then, from behind, Baskin startles him at his desk.

BASKIN

Hollis. Come to my office, please?

INT. BASKIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Preston follows Baskin into his office. He sinks into the uncomfortable beanbag chair, opposite Baskin, Jed and Lest.

PRESTON

Hey, everyone. Good weekend?

Jed and Lest glare at him. Baskin has an impatient look.

BASKIN

Preston, it isn't my business how interns spend their weekends. Or dress. But when videos like this --

PRESTON

(interrupting, confused)
I'm sorry -- videos like what?

BASKIN

Don't play pretend, okay?

Realizing the true confusion on Preston's face, Baskin turns his laptop around. It's open to a YouTube video, titled: **Drag Queen Jogger Boy Street Fight**. The video already has tens of thousands of views.

Preston's expression sinks further. He knows what he's about to see when Baskin hits play...

ON SCREEN: *We see a wide shot of Jake's suburban Long Island street. We hear the voice of a LONG ISLAND HOUSEWIFE:*

LONG ISLAND HOUSEWIFE (O.S.)

Okay. So. Drama.

Jake in workout clothes and Preston in Marie Antoinette costume come into focus. From a distance, we hear:

PRESTON

I SAID I'M SORRY!

LONG ISLAND HOUSEWIFE (O.S.)

See? What'd I tell you? Drama.

For the rest of the video, we can't make out what Preston or Jake is saying, as this housewife keeps talking:

LONG ISLAND HOUSEWIFE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Now I hate being nosey. But...these two are running up and down my street! Shouting! One's dressed like a...Muppet Richard Simmons.

She zooms in on Jake, then pans the camera over to Preston.

LONG ISLAND WOMAN

And the black guy's dressed like a drag queen! Not that I'm sure you'd call him a "guy." Terms these days!

Jake says something (inaudible) to leave Preston speechless.

LONG ISLAND WOMAN (CONT'D)
 My daughter says I now have to call everyone "they." And I go, "I'm not the enemy here. Why on earth -- "

Preston punches Jake, who falls. The woman is startled.

LONG ISLAND WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Ohhhh, mister-sister. He hit him!
 Or, I mean...they hit...them...!

Preston turns and looks the phone right in the face.

LONG ISLAND WOMAN (CONT'D)
 No. Do they think I'm recording this? I'm not recording this...

She pans her camera over to a bed of flowers.

LONG ISLAND WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Would you look at those peonies!

The camera CUTS to black...

BACK IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM: Baskin, Jed, and Lest all shake their heads, disappointed. Then, Jed BURSTS at Preston.

JED
 You noob! What's the one thing we asked of you noobs?

BASKIN
 Jed? Calm! Calm.
 (to Preston, more leveled)
 Anyway. Preston. What's the one thing we asked of you noobs?

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - EARLY AFTERNOON

Jake sits at the table, his face in his hands. Across from him, Nancy watches the video on her phone. We hear:

LONG ISLAND WOMAN (O.S.)
*Do they think I'm recording this?
 I'm not recording this... -- Would you look at those peonies!*

Nancy looks baffled, having now watched several times.

NANCY
 I...still don't understand. If P.B. missed your birthday, and then came to say sorry, why did he punch you?

Jake doesn't respond. Just stares into his bowl of cereal.

INT. PRESTON'S SUMMER HALLWAY - THAT SAME AFTERNOON

Preston walks sadly into his apartment with a mostly-empty banker's box. As he comes through the door, he gets a call. Deep breath. He tries to fake enthusiasm as he answers:

PRESTON

Hi! Mom! I'm at work now, can I --

His face sinks as he listens to her.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Oh! You saw that? Well, know how Jake and I used to make those play videos? So this weekend we --

(long pause)

Oh. Ted Baskin called?

His face sinks further as she says more into the phone.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

Yes. I'll pack and be home tonight.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - THAT EVENING

Jake, on his laptop, clicks among a variety of wide-ranging BLOG POSTS reacting to the video of him and Preston...

One headline: **Marie Antoinette Punching Fat Man is the Weirdest Thing You'll See This Monday.**

Another: **Violent Black Man Lashes Out Against White Boy**

Another: **Why Our Children Aren't Safe Around Trans People**

Another: **KWEEN of Versailles becomes Gay Viral Sensation**

Jake looks on every single one in disappointed bewilderment.

EXT. HOLLIS FAMILY FRONT DOOR - SAME EVENING

Preston, luggage in hand, knocks on the front door.

Junior opens. He glares at his son. Furious. Before Preston can say anything, Junior walks away. Empty door left open.

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Later that night, Preston walks through an upstairs hallway. He puts his head up to a door where, off screen, Clarissa and Junior are YELLING through a discussion:

CLARISSA (O.S.)
Honey! Aren't we going to at least talk with him about it?

JUNIOR (O.S.)
Talk? I'm not talking to that boy about his disgusting habits.

CLARISSA (O.S.)
But maybe we should let him --

JUNIOR (O.S.)
And cocaine use?! I didn't raise my son to turn into some stereotype of a druggie from the projects.

The last statement confuses Preston. Still, too sick to hear another word, he pulls his head away and heads to his room.

INT. PRESTON'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Preston walks into his childhood bedroom, covered with tiny childhood SPORTSMANSHIP medals.

As he walks to his bed, Preston gets a call. It's Cameron. Preston slowly picks up and speaks softly into the phone:

PRESTON
Hello?

CAMERON (O.S.)
Ugh. Finally she picks up! Babe, this video? Incredible. Literally playing at the bars right now.

INT. "THE HUNTER" GAY BAR - SIMULTANEOUS

Cameron is calling from a gay bar, where a BIG SCREEN is showing the video of Preston punching Jake. Gay men cheer, laugh, snap in excitement.

CAMERON
You've out-icon'd yourself, again. Amazing. Get down here.

Intercut with Preston on phone.

PRESTON

Um. I can't do that, Cameron. I can't...see you for a while.

CAMERON

What do you mean? You're literal Manhattan gay royalty. This is the dream. This is what we live for.

Preston is crying. But as he speaks, he tries to hide that.

PRESTON

I um...need to go, Cameron.

Preston ends the call. And then, he powers off his phone.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

Several days later. Jake sits eating. Then, a knock on the door. Jake stands to open it. To his surprise, it's Alyssa.

JAKE

Alyssa. Hi.

ALYSSA

Hey! I realized it was rude of me to come to your party last week without a gift. So...here's a gift.

She hands him a folder adorned with a bow. He quietly opens it. Inside, a biblical cartoon she's drawn: Moses is standing on Mount Sinai. But instead of the ten commandments...

JAKE

It's Moses holding...two posters of *Do The Right Thing*.

ALYSSA

I personally imagine *He Got Game* would be his top Spike Lee joint. But, it's your birthday and all.

JAKE

Alyssa! Thanks. This is truly rad.

He isn't trying to perform for her. Just gives her a hug.

ALYSSA

Um, that's not the only reason I'm here. I came to say I, um...lied to you? I don't have a boyfriend.

Jake nods, slowly. Not sure how he's supposed to react.

ALYSSA (CONT'D)

I had one. But he treated me like shit. And, I just didn't want to get treated like shit again.

JAKE

Oh. Um. That's cool. I'm usually the one who gets treated like shit. Or you know, punched.

ALYSSA

Yeah. Wanna talk about it? Some place that'll cheer you up?

INT. IKEA - A BIT LATER

Jake and Alyssa sit up side-by-side on an IKEA bed, mid-heart-to-heart. Both are quietly upfront as they speak.

ALYSSA

At least I get now why Hollis was weird with Erin. But shit. Has he even apologized to you?

JAKE

No. And, between you and me, I'm not sure he has to.

ALYSSA

Really? What do you mean?

JAKE

You can't hear it on the video. But the moment before he punched me, I called him a...word. That starts with an F? And has two G's?

ALYSSA

Oh.

Jake, ashamed, registers Alyssa's disappointment in him.

JAKE

Yeah. I know. I regret it a whole fucking lot.

ALYSSA

Good. Because like...you're not a homophobe, are you?

JAKE

No, and I am not secretly in love with Preston!

Alyssa is confused by Jake's knee-jerk response.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Sorry. My B.

ALYSSA
You do...love him, though, right?
As a friend?

JAKE
Maybe. I dunno. I hate what I said.
But this whole summer he's just
made me feel so...ugly.

Jake looks away. Until, Alyssa moves her pinky onto his hand.

ALYSSA
I don't think you're ugly.

He turns back. Alyssa looks into his face.

JAKE
You only have to say that because
you're my friend.

Alyssa shakes her head. Then, she puts her whole hand on his, leans in, and kisses Jake. He smiles.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You only have to do that because
you're my friend.

She laughs at this joke. Then, Jake kisses her again.

INT. AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH - MORNING

Preston sits in church, next to his mom, dad and grandma. In their Sunday best, they listen to a soprano and choir singing the sorrowful Negro spiritual "Fix Me, Jesus."

SOPRANO (SINGING)
Fix me for my long white robes...
Fix me for my sorry soul...

Clarissa puts her hand on Preston's hand. Sympathetic. He pulls it away. Both look ahead, silent, the whole time.

INT. JAKE'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Nancy sits in pajamas, eating breakfast. Jake walks through the door, wearing clothes from his night before. He tries to play it cool as he opens the fridge. Nancy teases him.

NANCY

And who is this stranger? Does he live here? I can't even remember the last night he spent at home...

JAKE

Mommmmm. Shut up.

NANCY

So Alyssa Kaplan, huh? A girl from Hebrew School...!

She smiles to herself. Jake rolls his eyes, embarrassed.

NANCY (CONT'D)

And to think how you used to cry: "Don't make me go to Hebrew School! I'd rather go pee-pants again!"

JAKE

Mommmmm! I never said that.

NANCY

Did too! Back when you were six. All because you...well, never mind.

She quietly returns to her breakfast. Jake is now curious.

JAKE

What? All because I what?

NANCY

Because you...couldn't bring P.B. You said it was lonely without him.

Oh. Jake slumps down into a chair. Nancy takes a deep breath. She recounts the following slowly, fondly, carefully.

NANCY (CONT'D)

So I said: "I know. 'Cause you're not like everyone there. That's lonely. Being different's more lonely than being alone..."

(beat)

But know what? Get used to it, stop whining, and finish your Israeli Prime Ministers coloring book!"

Jake chuckles. Bittersweet. She smiles at him. Bittersweet. He considers all this as he starts fidgeting with a napkin.

NANCY (CONT'D)

You miss him, don't you?

JAKE
No. Kind of. Yeah.

Jake stares at the napkin as he slowly tears it up. Sigh.

NANCY
Are you still planning to go to his
sister's wedding after all this?

JAKE
Wedding? I dunno. Doubt I'm even
gonna be invited at this point...

NANCY
What do you mean at this point? I
mailed your RSVP the other week.

Jake looks at Nancy. Confused by her casual insistence.

JAKE
Mom, what RSVP?

NANCY
That envelope. For Mr. and Mrs.
Hollis? I saw it in the recycling
and assumed Sheena knocked it over.
Why? Was I not supposed to mail it?

EXT. POST OFFICE - A BIT LATER

Jake, panicked, SPRINTS through the post office parking lot.

When Jake gets to the door, he pulls, pushes, pulls. It's
locked. He looks at the door. Fuck.

JAKE
Go shit yourself, Sundays!

EXT. CLEO'S HOME - LATER THAT DAY

Jake KNOCKS on the door until Cleo opens up, confused. She is
still wearing church clothes (hat way larger than her face).

JAKE
Cleo! I need to ask you! Have you
spoken to Evelyn Hollis lately?

CLEO
Lately? No. Haven't spoken to that
woman in...two, maybe three hours.

JAKE

Okay, so yes. Has she mentioned any news about her grandson? Bad news?

CLEO

You must mean that his parents are keeping him at home. Since they learned he's...like my cousin Cy. Whose brother Walter sold --

JAKE

Cleo, do you know how his parents found out about that? Did it have anything to do with a letter?

CLEO

A letter? Nuh uh, not a letter.

Jake sighs. Quite relieved to hear this.

CLEO (CONT'D)

Wait! Do you mean letter from the mail, or letter from the alphabet?

JAKE

A letter from the mail!

CLEO

Oh. Then, yes! Don't know who from, though. Even Evelyn's got no idea! Says Junior refuses to talk about it. Typical. But shouldn't you know all this? Aren't you his friend?

Jake looks panicked, sorry, broken-hearted. Fuck.

INT. PRESTON'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Preston sits alone on his childhood bed reading the queer theory book HOW TO BE GAY by David Halperin.

Suddenly, Junior BARGES in, looking upset. Preston sits up, startled, like he's been caught in some shameful act.

JUNIOR

Preston! Get up!

PRESTON

Dad, don't get mad. It's a textbook I have to read for --

JUNIOR

No! It's your grandmother. Hurry!

INT. JUNIOR'S CAR - A BIT LATER

Junior drives his car as Clarissa navigates from her phone in the passenger seat. Both look panicked.

JUNIOR
If she fell, why wouldn't an ambulance have arrived yet?

CLARISSA
We don't know yet that she fell!
Her text just says we need to find her at 575 Vanderbilt Parkway.

JUNIOR
That's not even close to her home.
Why would she be there? I'm asking!

CLARISSA
Honey! I don't know!

Preston stares out the window, frustrated, concerned.

EXT. SPORTING COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Preston, Clarissa and Preston get out of the parked car and start running toward a building labeled **SPORTING CENTER**.

JUNIOR
Hurry up!

Preston SPRINTS ahead to the building, out-pacing his dad.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
Okay, well slow down! Your mother can't run that fast!

Preston doesn't listen. Keeps running until he's at the door.

INT. SPORTING COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Preston, Junior and Clarissa enter this COMPLETELY DARK sporting center. It is silent. They call out. Echoes.

CLARISSA
Evelyn?!

PRESTON
Grandma?!

JUNIOR
Mother?!

Suddenly, we hear a CLANK: lights switching on. As they light up, we see that we're inside a large, indoor SKATING RINK.

CLARISSA
Where are we? Is that...?

PRESTON
...Michelle Kwan?!

Half-way down the rink, Olympic skater MICHELLE KWAN steps and glides onto the ice. With ease, she stops in the center.

CLARISSA
And...Jake?!

Behind her, we see Jake, in ice skates. He STEPS on the ice, HOLDS the rail, and uncomfortably PULLS his way to the Hollis family's end of the rink. He speaks into a MICROPHONE.

JAKE
Hollises? I'm sorry if I scared you. Grandma Evelyn's totally fine. She's right there!

Jake waves to BLEACHERS at the side, where Evelyn (smiling, waving) and Cleo (arms folded) sit in the front row.

JUNIOR
Mother! We thought you had a fall!

EVELYN
A fall?! Ha! I'm never gonna die!

JAKE
Cleo there convinced her to help me. To help me get you here today.

CLEO
We ladies need something to talk about at bible study...

Clarissa looks relieved. Junior looks angry. Preston looks thoroughly confused. Michelle Kwan just looks on.

JAKE
Mr. and Mrs. Hollis? I brought you here so I can say sorry to you. And your son. For writing that letter.

PRESTON
Letter? Wait, what letter?

Preston's confusion grows. His parents avoid his eye contact.

JAKE

The letter I sent your parents. Did they not tell you about it?

CLARISSA

Your...father didn't want to...

Junior glares at Clarissa. Preston glares at both of them, then back to Jake. Michelle Kwan is staying OUT of it.

JAKE

Oh. Okay. Well, I was upset after my birthday. And I wanted to punish you. So, I wrote a letter telling them about your...summer.

Preston glares at Jake. Realizing. Seething.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I never meant to mail it, Mr. and Mrs. Hollis! But, still. I should never have written it in the first place. Just like I...never should have called your son a bad word.

EVELYN

He doesn't mean the N-word!

JAKE

No, a different bad word. One that also has two G's. Not "Gargamel."

CLEO

(confused at the nonsense)
"Gargamel?"

MICHELLE KWAN

We know what bad word you're talking about, Jake! Move it along!

JAKE

Right. Well, I never should have tried to hurt P.B. Because in all the time I've known him, he's never wanted anything but the best for me. For everyone. So...why we gotta punish him now for wanting a little bit of best for himself?

Clarissa looks at Preston, moved. Junior remains stoic.

JUNIOR

I still do not understand why we're at an ice rink. Or who she is?

Jake wobbles over to where Michelle Kwan is standing.

JAKE

This...is Olympic figure skater Michelle Kwan. And when your son was a kid, he thought something was wrong with him because she was his favorite athlete. Right, Peeb?

Michelle Kwan smiles at Preston, sympathetically. He then looks at his parents, who are surprised to hear all this. He apprehensively decides to be honest with them.

PRESTON

Yeah. That's right.

JAKE

Right. Well, when I was a kid, I know I was a mopey pain-in-the-ass every time the Mets lost a playoff game. Isn't that right?

Preston nods, and stoically snaps in agreement. We cut to bittersweet looks from Michelle Kwan as Jake continues...

JAKE (CONT'D)

So, as I figure, you probably felt real shitty when Michelle Kwan didn't win the gold medal at the 1998 Nagano Olympics. Right?

PRESTON

Yeah. I did, actually.

JAKE

And you must have been sad when she got bronze in Salt Lake City four years later. Right?

PRESTON

Yeah. I was.

JAKE

And it must have been straight-up painful when, after she lost gold in 2002, she did that Olympics exhibition to the song "Fields of Gold" -- in a gold dress?

CLARISSA

That was so heartbreaking.

Michelle Kwan smiles back in appreciation. Preston looks at his mom, surprised she knows what Jake is talking about. Tearing up, Clarissa lifts her arm around Preston.

JAKE

But someone made you think it was wrong to say you were hurting. In a way, we all did. And that's why I want to say, in front of you and your family: I'm sorry, Peeb.

Preston listens carefully. No longer so angry.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry you ever felt there was anything wrong with you. I'm sorry you ever felt you had to hide yourself from us. And I'm sorry that -- even when we were always together -- you had to spend your childhood so alone.

Junior lifts his HAND and gently places it on Preston's BACK. Something that feels unfamiliar to both of them. Preston is on the verge of tears. But he clamps down. Silent.

CLARISSA

But...Jake, honey? How exactly did you get Michelle Kwan here?

Then, from a corner behind Preston, we hear a FAMILIAR SIGH.

CAMERON

Oh, you know. Made a call or two.

Preston turns to see Cameron, wrapped in SPECTACULAR fur.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

What? Had to get you to answer your texts somehow. Balsamic bitch.

Despite the blasé tone, Cameron winks and grins at Preston.

PRESTON

Cameron. You...? You...came to a suburban sports complex?

JAKE

He did. And because we both missed our friend, he convinced Michelle here to skate to "Fields of Gold." So you'd know how sorry I am.

Preston considers. On second thought, he has another idea...

PRESTON

Uh huh. Well. Seems to me like if you were really sorry, then you'd skate to "Fields of Gold" instead.

MICHELLE KWAN

Yeah, I sort of agree with that...

JAKE

What? Me skate? Nah, you really wouldn't want to see that.

Jake brushes it off. Preston's parents agree with Michelle:

CLARISSA

I did assume you'd be skating, honestly.

JUNIOR

You said the F-word, it's the least you can do...

CAMERON

I cannot wait to see this.

Cameron LIGHTS up a cigarette. Michelle Kwan STEPS OFF the ice to stand next to him. She takes out her iPhone to record.

ALL EYES ON JAKE as lights dim. He looks around as if to ask, "Really?" Everybody returns looks to insist, "Mm-hmm." Fuck.

Eva Cassidy's acoustic cover of "Fields of Gold" (the one Kwan used at the 2002 Winter Olympics) starts to blast. And with that, Jake begins his **SKATING ROUTINE:**

- First, Jake moves his hands around one another in circles. From there, he mimes FLAPPING wings, unbeautifully.

- Next, Jake skates forward with his hand on his heart. He then extends that arm, with GREAT YEARNING, and lowers his hand until it touches the surface of the ice. He FLINCHES.

JAKE

Oop, nope -- that's cold.

- Once he's moving with more ease, Jake attempts a SPIRAL SEQUENCE. He leans forward with his arms out, the way Kwan used to do so gracefully. Jake WOBBLER. Cleo responds.

CLEO

Oooh, this is bad!

- Jake scowls at Cleo. Everyone's face reveals they find Jake's skating hard to watch but too amusing to look away.

- Eventually, Jake picks up speed, preparing for a JUMP. He clutches his arms to his chest as he KICKS down into the ice, expecting to LAUNCH into the air. Nope.

THUD. Jake falls FLAT on the ice. Everyone gasps. But before anyone else can say anything...

PRESTON

JAKE!

Preston BOLTS toward the ice and CLIMBS over the ledge. He steps onto the ice, without skates. Jake wheezes.

JAKE

Peeb...!

PRESTON

Jake, I'm coming!

Preston tries to WALK-SHUFFLE across the ice toward Jake. For a moment, he seems to have his balance. Until...

THUD. Preston falls FLAT on the ice. Everybody gasps.

JAKE

Peeb...!

Jake and Preston, now lying three feet apart, try to pull themselves toward each other. On the ice, this takes several awkward, slippery, unbalanced moments.

PRESTON

Jake...!

Finally, the two hurt friends meet. They grab hands, balancing to hold each other up as they sit on the ice.

PRESTON (CONT'D)

You good, man?

JAKE

Yeah man. You good?

PRESTON

Yeah. I mean...my life's a damn mess. But I'm good. We good?

JAKE

I hope so?

PRESTON

Me too. I'm sorry I was so shitty to you all summer.

JAKE

I'm sorry I was jealous of you all summer.

Preston shrugs, casually appreciating that.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I know you've gotta do your own thing now. And make your own friends. And be alone with guys who, you know, aren't me.

Preston's lips press together into a big, bittersweet smile.

PRESTON

C'mon, man. I might make other friends who are guys. And I might date other guys who are guys. But Jake...you're my boy.

Jake smiles back.

JAKE

No. You're my boy!

PRESTON

Nuh uh. You my boy!

JAKE

Naw. You mah boiiiiiii, boiiiiiii.

They hug. Tight.

Around the rink, Preston's family smiles. Even Cleo does. Cameron too. And Michelle Kwan, beaming as she films them.

MICHELLE KWAN

Awww! That was so...truly weird.

*Sarah Vaughan's romantic, lilting recording of "My Man (Mon Homme)" begins to play as we launch into one **FINAL MONTAGE:***

INT. LONG ISLAND DINER - LATE THAT NIGHT

Preston and Jake are eating at the diner, laughing. Each is holding an ice pack on his bruised shoulder.

Jake teasingly takes a cold, raw, plain tomato slice from Preston's plate and eats it. Ew. Preston rolls his eyes.

INT. JAKE'S LIVING ROOM DEN - LATER

Jake sits behind Alyssa, kissing her ear -- their arms linked like Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore's in *Ghost*.

We zoom out to reveal they are assembling an IKEA chair.

INT. GAY BAR - NIGHT

Preston sits in a gay bar with Cameron, Timmi and Daniel. They all make cry-faces as Daniel holds up his phone: we see GWYNETH PALTROW accepting her Academy Award for Best Actress.

The four friends all laugh, vodka sodas in hand. Clink.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nathaniel, Adam and Finn are sitting around a computer. They look at a blog that reads: **Drag Queen and Jogger Boy Make Up On Ice.**

ADAM

What the actual fuck?

NATHANIEL

They're totally gay for each other.

INT. JAKE'S SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Jake and his mom are out for a jog. Jake is wearing his SHAQ t-shirt. Nancy is pulling their cat, Sheena, on a leesh.

INT. CAMERON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Preston demonstrates a DEATH-DROP for Cameron, Timmi, Daniel and Sal. Timmi attempts one, but he's unsuccessful. Ouch.

SAL

Don't worry! Mommy's got Klonopin!

INT. HOLLIS FAMILY FRONT HALLWAY - DAY

Preston hugs Clarissa. His luggage from the summer is packed at his side. Junior walks into the room.

After letting go of his mom, Preston approaches Junior. Junior sticks out his arm for a handshake. Preston disregards it. He hugs Junior. Junior yields and hugs his son back.

INT. COLLEGE LIBRARY - DAY

In a career advising seminar, Jake is creating a LinkedIn Account. He types in a credit for this past summer.

It reads: **SENIOR DIGITAL INTERN - Cleo Home Pictures, Inc.**

INT. UNIVERSITY BUILDING HALLWAY - DAY

In the hallway of a university classroom building, Preston puts his name on a sign-up sheet labeled **LGBT Center**.

INT. COLLEGE DORM ROOM - NIGHT

In Jake's Kenyon dorm room, an episode of *LIVING SINGLE* plays on a TV. In his lap, he's on a FaceTime call with Preston.

We reveal Jake is wearing his *LIVING SINGLE* SWEATSHIRT that Preston got him as a gift. He points to it and tilts his head with an egging-on look...

INT. UNIVERSITY DORM ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Preston, in his UPenn dorm, rolls his eyes on the other end of this FaceTime call.

He begrudgingly stands up and puts on his *LIVING SINGLE* SWEATSHIRT that Jake got him. It is way too large on him.

Either way, Jake gives a thumbs-up. Preston smirks.

PAN OUT on the laptop screen, where Jake smiles back. As we zoom out, the PRINT TEXT on the back of Preston's baggy sweatshirt comes into view. The text reads: **IN A '90S KINDA WORLD, I'M GLAD I GOT MY GIRLS.**

FADE TO BLACK.