

DEAR FAGGOT

The stage is an apartment living room setting where two men live, including a couch, T.V. and a dining room table and chairs. The phone is ringing as the curtain rises.

Todd: (Calls from behind closed door to the apartment) In a minute. Hold on. I'll be there. (Struggles to open door, carrying bags of groceries as he enters.) Why do phones always have to ring when you've got your hands full of groceries? God! (Puts groceries on the couch) In a minute. (Runs to the phone - out of breath.) Hello? . . . Yes,. . . Yes, Danny Boyer lives here. No, he's not here right now. Can I take a message? No, I don't know when he . . . Well, I'm sorry you feel that way. . . . Now wait a minute. . . . Look . . I . . I ..Listen here, God damned it. You've got no right to call me up and talk to me like that. Yes, I'm a faggot too, and damned proud to be one. . . For your information, I do have Aids . . and ..no . . No, I'm not going to die . . not for you . . or for anyone. What kind of person are you to say something like that? That's cruel. Oh! You're a christian. Well that explains everything. Why don't you go back to church and learn something about love. Oh, ho, ho! I don't think so. Are you threatening me? I don't have to sit here and listen to this bull shit. (slams phone down.) Jesus Christ! What do these people want from us. (picks up groceries and moves them to kitchen area. Phone rings again.) Hello? Who is this? Well, fuck you too. No, . . I think our conversation is over. (slams phone down and goes back to groceries. Phone rings. Answers angrily)

Hello? Oh God, Charley. I'm so glad to talk to a friend. Some weirdo just called and said (breaks into tears) Oh, Charley, he said, "Why don't you do us all a big favor you faggot. Get Aids and die." My God, Charley. Do you know how much that hurts? Thanks. You always call at the right time. Yeah, it's a real zoo here today. The phone never stops ringing. I just put

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it down and "ring ring". You know me - - how much I love people to call. I used to go to bed at night and say, "Please God. Could you do me one little bittey favor? Just one call today God. Please. Just one call for me." But this. Oh my God. This is to much. (pause) Change my number? Do you know how many bathroom stalls have this phone number on it? (Laughter). No, no. You know I'm only kidding. Danny's the only one for me. . . Since we got together . (pause) Oh sure, I've got eyes and I look at other men. But, what do you think I am? Crazy? I look, but that's as far as it goes. I'm married. I mean, we're married. You don't mess around and stay married. Do you think I want to be single again? No sirree!! I've been there. You remember how I was. How much I loved to party. Oh God. All that drinking and carrying on. A real trollop. Some cute guy would come on to me - - I'd just roll over like a female dog in heat. Roll over, throw my legs up in the air and . . Well, you know how I was. God, if I only knew then what I know now. What I really wanted was for someone to love me. Night after night I'd go out looking. You know what I found out? My dick's got a head on it. A great big head. But d'you know what? There's no brain in that head. My brain's up here (taps head). I let my stupid dick do the thinking for me. That brainless dick told me what to do. So I just followed it wherever it wanted to go. Yeah! It felt good . . On a good night, I could cum two, maybe three times. I remember one night - I don't mean to brag, but - I just finished up with my third trick and looked at my watch. It was 1:15 in the morning. And I thought to myself, "It's still early. I wonder if I could go for four." Then I said to myself, "Todd" - (pause) Oh, sure. I talk to myself a lot. Sometimes I got two or three people inside. All talking at the same time telling me what to do. Do I listen? Hell, no. Who do I listen to? That brainless head on my

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dick, that's who. So I said to myself, "Todd! What the hell are you looking for? You've scored three times tonight. My dick is so sore it's gonna' fall off. What are you looking for?" (pause) I never answered that question. I went out. Found me a fourth trick for the night. No! I'm not bragging. I'm telling you something you need to know. Don't let your brainless dick head do your thinking for you. It'll fall off in your hands and still keep telling you go out and get some more. So I went out and found me this fourth trick. A really cute guy too. Nice butt. Big dick. This guy was someone to die for. And, do you know what? I couldn't cum. (pause) And, I think I got it from this guy. Don't ask me how I know. It's . . . just a feeling I have inside. He came inside me and - just walked out. Just like that. He . . . he walked out. Said, "I gotta go now". No I love you. Not even thanks for a good lay. I drank a lot that night and blamed it on the booze. But I remember. When I woke up - - I felt different - - inside. Something wasn't right, and I knew it. I felt scared. What if - - Naw! He was a cute kid. Young. I mean, 18 or 19. . and he said he liked girls. Yeah! They don't get it . . . not that young. They're safe to play with. (pause) I think I got it from that guy. What a record I got. I sure scored big time. Did I ever get the love I wanted? But, what did I know about love. I thought love was being laid by a cute guy with a big dick. Huh! I used to think love and sex were the same. (Chuckles) You don't find love looking through the bottom of a glass. The empty lonely nights, trying to fill them with laughs. A trick is a trick is a trick. You wake up the next morning and look at that person in bed with you and wonder, "who is this person. My God, I can't even remember his name."

Yeah, yeah. I know. We've all been there. I did some stupid ass things in those days. But who knew? AIDS? What was that? Back then, nobody knew. (Sighs) I wish I did.

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I'm so glad you call me every day. Some days are better than others. Today I'm pretty good. But, this God damned phone.

No, Danny went to work today. He seemed o.k.. They let him out of the hospital last night. Just kept him there all day for observation and then told him to go home. Said he wasn't going to die. Some wise ass bitchy nurse said that and some other cheap comment about faggots.

As if the day wasn't upsetting enough for him. God! I don't think our lives will ever be the same. No, I don't think this will change him. Yeah, he's a real sweetheart. I knew that the first time I saw him. Do you know, he wouldn't go to bed with me on our first date? Nope! Said he wanted to get to know me first. I tried every trick in the book to get him to come home with me.

He wanted to date. Can you imagine? That was 7 years ago. (Chuckles) And we're still together. 7 years. To have someone love me. I mean, really love me. More than that - to have someone in my life who not only loves me - but he puts up with me and stays with me - - even with this - - this fuckin' disease. God, Charley, I'm lucky. I know so many who're all alone. It's bad enough to be alone and come home to an empty bed. But to wake up in the dark and be alone . . and be scared. That's when I need a hug. To feel his strong arms reach out in the dark and wrap around me and tell me he's there. I'm so lucky to have Danny. Whoops! Bathroom's calling. I gotta run. No pun intended. Let me tell you, when you got the big A and that toilet seat calls your name, you better move. Call you later sweetie. Bye bye.

(hangs up and exits stage left. Phone rings.)

(calls from off stage). Jesus Christ! I can't even take a dump in peace. Wait a minute, will ya? (pause. Phone continues to ring.) Hang on. I'm almost finished. I'll be right there.

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(sound of toilet flushing as Todd comes running into room, pulling up his pants and answers the phone.)

Hello! Hello! Dammit! (slams down phone) Must be a rule of the universe. Hurry to finish your job to answer the phone, and they'll hang up just as you get there. (Moves to stage right to open a drawer or cabinet.) Let's see . . what pills did I take this morning? Gee's! There's so many of these damned things. I can't keep 'em straight anymore. Oh . . here they are. Two of you little yellow ones . . (kisses them) Mmmm! Love these yellow ones. They go down so easy. And . . one orange one. Echh! You I can do without. (Gets some water as the phone rings.)

Where's the maid when you need one. Hang on . . Hang on . . I'm coming. This better not be one of them fucking homophobes. (Picks up phone.)

Hello! Yes. No, he's not here right now. This is Todd Andrews, his roommate. You're who? Anderson Cooper (or Larry King)? You've gotta' be kidding. Really? You're really Anderson Cooper . . of ??? the national news? Oh My God! Wow! Danny's really made big time. Sure, I can take a message. You'd like to interview him? At our local T.V. Station? He should be coming home from work right about now. (Looks at watch) Matter of fact, he should be coming through that door real soon. Sure. . let me get a pencil, I want to write down that number. O.K.. I'll have him call you when he gets home. Oh . . no. . we don't need to call you collect. O.k. O.k.. he'll call you. Bye, bye. (hangs up) Yes! (excitedly) Anderson Cooper wants to interview Danny. Hot damned. I never dreamed he'd be such a celebrity. And Anderson Cooper . . Oh my God!! He's so cute . . I sure would like to meet him. (Phone rings)

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Hello. Oh, hi mom. I know. It's been ringing off the hook all day. You'll never guess who I've been talking to. Anderson Cooper. Yes . you know . . . the cute guy you like on the news. He wants to interview Danny. Can you believe that. On national news. No, I haven't seen the latest on t.v. Really? They showed Danny? A close up? Oh God, they showed him rolling on the ground? Wrestling with that guy? And they actually showed him being shot? I did capture the news on Tivo, but haven't check it out yet. . .

I don't know if I want to see that again. To see my honey actually being shot. Once is enough. I mean I was there. I saw the flash of the gun. The noise. I even smelled the gunpowder. Oh God, it was horrible. One minute we're just standing there watching the president . . and bam, bam, bam. Three shots, just like that. Right behind us . . this guy is shooting the President of the United States. One shot hit him. Maybe more would've if Danny didn't start wrestling with the guy. I'm standing there in horror, . . Horror! Watching my lover fight with this guy holding a gun. I never saw a t.v. camera. How'd they . . .Oh, some guy was shootin' his own video. Probably a cell phone. Never saw him. I'll never forget the look on this guy's face. He's crazy. Yeah, he's screaming, "death to that faggot lover. Kill all them fuckin' faggots." He's shootin' this pistol . . at the President of the United States. I've never been so scared in all my life. It happened so fast. What kind of world do we live in? There's people out there that want to kill us. Danny and I live a quiet, respectable life. We pay our bills. We don't flaunt it. Most people think we're just roommates. Not many know we're lovers. It's not something you fly from a flagpole. You read about fag bashings in the paper . . but, . . I know mom. We are careful. Can you believe it? Because we've got a president who's fighting for our

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rights, who thinks we can get married . . . some jerk wants to kill him? Oh . . . Mom . . . I gotta' go. The bathroom's calling my name. I did, mom. I took 'em just before you called. I love you too. Bye, bye. (hangs up, then quickly removes phone from receiver) There, I'm gonna' take a dump in peace. (exits stage right)

(Doorbell rings)

Jesus Christ! (shouts) Wait a minute. I'll be there.

(Rings again)

Alright, already. (enters pulling up pants) Hold on. Who's there?

Mailman: (answers thru closed door.) Fed Ex . . . Special delivery for Danny Boyer.

Todd: (opens door) He's not here right now.

Mailman: O.K. Someone needs to sign for the package . . .

Todd: I'll sign for it. (signs receipt and receives one day service mail package and closes door.) This is getting to be too much for me. I never get to finish. (exits stage right)

(Doorbell rings)

(Calls from offstage) Jesus Christ! Haven't I gone through enough. Just one minutes' peace. Hold on! I'll be there. (Toilet flush. Doorbell rings again.) I'm coming. I'm coming. (enters pulling up pants as he approaches door.) Who's there?

Danny: It's me, Danny.

Todd: Why don't you use your key?

Danny: I forgot it. Hurry up. Open the door. I've got to go to the bathroom. I gotta' pee.

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Todd: (Struggles with the lock.) Funny thing. I've been trying to go all day. First it's the phone, then it's the door bell. (opens door) Hi Honey.

Danny: (enters. His left arm is bandaged and in a sling.) Hi love. (Quick kiss) Can't stop now. I gotta' go really bad. (exits stage right. Replaces telephone on receiver as he passes it.)

(Phone rings)

Danny: (Offstage) Can you get that? I'm busy.

Todd: Jesus Christ! You get to relax on the throne, and I gotta' get the phone.

Danny: Come on Todd. Be a honey. Today's been one hell of a day. I'm coming unglued.

Todd: You think you've had a bad day. You don't know what that phone's been like. It just never stops ringing. (phone continues to ring.) All right. All right, already! I'm coming. (picks up phone) Hello. No, he's busy right now. Who's calling? I'm his roommate. Yes, we live together. I don't think that's any of your business. No, I don't think I'm going to hell . . . and . . . the president's not going to hell either. Just because he stands up for us . . . It's about time. We've always been here . . . You just didn't know. Get real, will you? . . . Where do you get off calling me a fuckin' fairy? Oh yeah? Well my mother happens to love me very much. . . And you're a bigot and homophobe. . . Fuck off, will ya? (Slams phone down) Grrrrr!! I'm going crazy. (Phone rings again. Todd answers angrily) Hello! Aww . . . Fuck you. (slams phone as Danny flushes toilet and enters. Todd screams in frustration.)

Danny: What's wrong?

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Todd: That fuckin' phone is driving me crazy. Since you became a celebrity, I . . . (phone rings) See. I told you so. You get it and see what I'm talking about.

Danny: Hello. Yes, speaking. Well thank you. No, I'm no hero. Anyone would have done the same thing. Well, I'm happy you feel that way. No, I hadn't really thought about writing a book. I'm just an ordinary guy who happened to be there. I'm glad we have a president who believes in what makes our country great. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for all people. If we didn't have him, we couldn't have had this kind of rally for gay rights. Oh. Are you gay? Do your parents know? Oh (sympathetically) I know. It's so hard living in a closet. Try calling a gay switchboard. It sure helps to talk to someone who understands. Where are you calling from? Fargo South Dakota? I see what you mean. You sound young. How old are you? Sixteen? That's a tough age. Yeah. I got picked on too. High School. Classmates. it hurts. No one else knows what it feels like. Some people can be awful cruel. Hang in there. I came from a small town too. No one back there knows who I am. I had to get away from that narrow minded thinking. Move to a city. They've got a lot of support organizations. Oh God, no. Don't go to a bible college. You won't find support there. Tell your folks you don't want to go. I know. It's tough to take a stand. You'll know when it's time to tell them. They may not. Sometimes they throw you out. Get some support. Find someone you can talk with. Sure you can call me. It's pretty far and your phone bill may . . . Oh God, don't ever do that? If you get that low, call me. Call someone. Call somebody. Call collect. Let me tell you right now . . . killing yourself is not a viable solution. It never has and it never will be. Believe me, things will get better. I'm leading the kind of life I always dreamed of. Well thank you. I don't know that

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I'm anyone's role model. . but . . Thank you. I'm glad I could help. (pause) Anytime. Sure. Goodbye. (hangs up phone) (To Todd) It's hard to be young and gay . . living in a small town. I was just like that kid. God, it was horrible. And look at me now. Married, wife, two kids, station wagon, home in the suburbs, white picket fence.

Todd: Well, . . . not quite. We live in a small apartment with a window that looks out over a parking lot and the dumpster, have a 1963 Camero that shakes when you go on the highway, and haven't decided yet, who's gonna' carry the baby. We haven't even decided who does the windows.

Danny: I never do windows. But, it would be nice to be a dad. To have a son . . or a daughter.

Todd: Do you expect this body to have stretch marks? I love you, but not that much.

Danny: We could adopt.

Todd: Sure. And maybe you'll win the lottery.

Danny: Times are changing.

Todd: Not that fast.

Danny: One thing's for sure.

Todd: What's that?

Danny: I love you. (wraps his arms around Todd) Something I've always wanted. Since my first crush in eighth grade. My English teacher. God he was so handsome. The other guys would be talking about feeling up Judy Feldman's breasts in Charley Archer's History Class and how good it felt. I just wanted Mr. Pauling to wrap his dark hairy arms around me. To hold me.

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I'd think about how it would feel and I'd start getting a hard on. He was so nice. So cute and handsome. I couldn't talk to anyone about how I felt. No one would understand. But I dreamed . . . some day. I'd find the man of my dreams.

Todd: And, Here I am. (phone rings) Damned. Coitus interruptus. How're we gonna' have kids if that damned phone keeps ringing.

Danny: Hello. Well I . . . Who do you . . . Fuck you too. (Slams phone down)

Todd: It's been like that all day.

Danny: Hate calls like that?

Todd: Most of 'em. You're a celebrity, but not many seem to like you. They want to string you up, cut your balls off and feed you to the wolves. There's a lot of folks who hate us.

Danny: I know. I found that out at work today. (pause) They fired me.

Todd: (shocked) What?

Danny: Yep. My boss called me into his office and said, "pack your things. you're fired."

Todd: They can't do that. You've been there too long.

Danny: It doesn't matter. No one knew I was gay until today. Now everyone knows.

Todd: They can't fire you because you're gay.

Danny: That's not the reason they'll put in my folder. They're too smart for that. Oh no. I asked him why? Do you know what he said?

Danny: The caliber of your work is not the quality we're looking for. Three promotions in four years, and suddenly the caliber of my work doesn't measure up.

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Todd: Fight 'em Danny. Don't let them do this to you.

Danny: It's not just the boss. Roger Banes came over to my desk, leaned over and said, "we know where you live faggot. You'll get outta' here if you know what's good for you." He smiled when he said that. That wonderful catholic father of six, smiled at me as he spoke.

Todd: That's harassment, Danny. Kick his ass around the block. Don't stand for that shit.

Danny: It's too big to fight, Todd. I'm not strong enough to . . . stand up to a corporation.

Todd: There's lawyers. We can fight 'em.

Danny: I don't know.

Todd: Come on, Danny. Somebody's gotta' take a stand. It ain't right.

Danny: I know it isn't right. You know it isn't right. But how do we change the world? I can't even change the antifreeze in my car.

Todd: But you can. You did. For God's sake, you saved the president's life. You, Danny Boyer, saved the president's life.

You're a hero.

Danny: Some fucking hero. I feel like shit right now. I think I'll have some coffee. (rises to kitchen) Do you want some?

Todd. No thanks. I'm trying to withdraw. My doctor says I drink too much coffee. Says that caffeine is bad for my body. Oh, by the way, Anderson Cooper called today.

Danny: Who?

Todd: You know, Anderson Cooper . . . the cute guy on TV . . . He does the news . . .

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Danny: The guy on the news?

Todd: Exactly. That Anderson Cooper.

Danny: He called me?

Todd: Yep. I told you, you were a celebrity. He wants to do a story on you.

Danny: Me? God, I've lived all my life in a small town in a closet, and now suddenly someone wants to do a story about me?

Todd: Oh, fame. How fleeting and fickle. (Looks at watch). It's almost time for the news. Hurry. Sit beside me. It's been on all day. (Turns on T.V.) Hurry . .it's 6 o'clock.

(Voice from T.V. "T.V. 20 now brings you the news." (New voice) "Oh my God! The president has been shot. The president of the United States has been shot." (TV 20 news voice) "Late yesterday afternoon, the president was shot while speaking to a national gay rights rally held in the capital. He had been pushing hard to promote an equal rights amendment bill, which would allow homosexual couples to marry and include harsh penalties for discrimination against homosexuals. This bill has created heavy fighting in both the house and senate, with sides deeply divided on the controversy. As he spoke, a gunman stepped from the crowd and began rapidly firing a pistol before another bystander wrestled the assailant to the ground. This is how the events happened as the president spoke.

(President speaking on T.V.) "I vowed, that if I was elected President of the United States, I would take the hard and necessary steps to insure the words of our constitution shall apply to all peoples. That means equal rights for everyone. We must learn to live in a world where there is no justification for prejudice. Race, religion, or sexual orientation cannot be the

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yardsticks we measure another human being. The rise of violent crimes upon our streets is appalling and cannot be tolerated. The term "fag bashing" has no place in the vocabulary of Americans, where freedom for all is our birthright. Every day that we discriminate, that we hate. That we refuse to avail ourselves of the potential of any group of Americans, we are all less than we ought to be. We cannot afford to waste the capacities, the contributions, the hearts, the souls, the minds of gay and lesbian Americans. "(cheering in background.)

"Each generation produces a segment of society that is oppressed. When that segment is oppressed through discrimination, the fabric of our constitution is threatened. By signing the equal rights amendment to our constitution, I have insured the rights for all Americans. The road to equal rights was built through the courage and efforts of those who believed in the principles that made our country great. The principle that all men are created equal. Today, I pledge (Bam. Bam. Bam. Bam. gun shots ring out. Screams in the background.)

T.V. Announcer: (very shaken) "Oh my God. The president has been shot. The president of the United States has just been shot." (pause . shouting in background) "I . . I .I don't know what . . (speak with hesitation, trying to assess and collect thoughts) The secret Service are using their bodies as human shields and covering . . protecting him. (Bam. Bam.) There's more shots coming from the crowd. I, I don't know where he was shot. I don't know how serious the injury is . . But . . it looked like he was hit. He spun around and collapsed to the stage, clutching his chest. . The stage is completely surrounded by the police and . . there . . near the front of the stage . . . are two people wrestling on the ground . . They're . . (Bam. Bam.) More shots. Now, the police have surrounded them . and . . I think that's where the shots came

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from. . Now they're calling for the president's limousine. . and, they're waving their arms and clearing the crowd. . Making a path. Now, he's sitting up. The president is sitting up. There's blood on his shoulder - and - the secret service are pushing him back down to the ground. I repeat, ladies and gentlemen. The president of the United States has just been shot.

You can see on your screens, the police have someone pinned to the . . no there's two men pinned to he ground. One seems to be wounded. The other's fighting with the police. (voice shouting in background) "You fucking faggot lovers. I'll kill you all. I'll kill the president. I'll kill all you faggot lovers."

New Commentator: Fortunately, our latest report from the hospital says the president is in good condition and resting comfortably in ?? hospital after being shot yesterday while addressing the largest Gay Rights Rally the world has ever known. Over one million gay and lesbians witnessed the horrible news story that shocked the world yesterday . The bullet passed through the presidents' chest, narrowly missing his heart and exited through his back. The gunman, a decorated marine sharpshooter had flown from Camp Pendleton after bitterly complaining to colleagues that someone needed to change the course of history for this country. These faggots can't be allowed to run our government. A video camcorder captured the attempted assassination. (repeat presidents speech) " By signing the equal rights amendment to our constitution, I have insured the rights for all Americans. The road to equal rights was built through the courage and efforts of those who believed in the principles that made our country great. The principle that all men are created equal."

Assasain's voice: "You fucking faggot lovers."

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President's voice: "Today, I pledge" (Bam. Bam. Bam. Bam. gun shots ring out. Screams in the background.)

Bystander 1 voice: Look out! He's got a gun.

Assassin's voice: "I'll kill you all. I'll kill the president. I'll kill all you faggot lovers."

Todd: Look . . . There you are. Look at you. Fighting with that guy. My hero. (Bam. Bam.) Oh my God! He shot you. He actually shot you.

Danny: Shh! I want to see this.

Todd: I've got it all on Tivo. You can see it over and over again. Oh! Oh! Look at your face. And that blood. Oh my God It's coming from your shoulder. Arrghh! How disgusting. You really should see this on video. We'll do it in slow motion.

Danny: (Throws pillow at Todd) C'mon.

Todd: Now! Watch that cop come charging at you from the right. There! (rises from couch to point to T.V.) Oh, he's cute. Lucky you. You always get the cute ones.

Danny: (angrily) Todd!

Todd: Look at him. The way he wraps his arms around you and throws you to the ground. Oh how macho! How Butch. Some people have all the luck. Look . . .he's putting handcuffs on you.

Announcer: A young man in the crowd is credited with saving the president's life. He grappled with the gunman and was shot in the shoulder as the gun went off multiple times as they fought. We have recently learned the young man's name is Danny Boyers. You can see him struggling with the assassin.

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Todd: Look at that! A close up. Just your face. On national T.V.. Oh, you're so cute.

Assassin's voice: Kill all them faggots. God wants 'em dead.

Announcer: The police, unsure who was the gunman, quickly brought both men to the ground. Both men were taken into custody.

(Phone rings)

Todd: (answers phone) Hello? (pause) You gotta' be kidding me. Is this really? Oh my God. (passing phone to Danny.) It's for you. It's the president.

Danny: What president?

Todd: (slowly) The president . . . of the United States .

Danny: No . . . No, it's not . . . quit fooling around . . . Who is it?

Todd: Some woman on the line, just asked for you and if you were home . . . She said the president of the United States was on the line and wanted to speak to you.

Danny: If this is some sort of a trick . . . (shaking his finger) You're gonna' pay big time for this kind of a joke . . . (takes phone . . . speaking hesitantly . . .) Hello? Yes, this is Danny Boyer. Who is this? Oh My God!! You've gotta' be kidding me. Really? Hello, Mr. President. Yes . . . ye (stammering) Yes sir! Thank you sir. I only did what any American would do. I'm doing fine, sir. Yes sir. Oh, it only hurts a little, sir. I . . . I don't know really know what to say. How are you today? (laughs) I see. (covers phone) He says he only hurts a little too, but only when he laughs. Oh, no sir, they treated me fine. After I got roughed up by the police, and the secret service got things straightened out, the hospital treated me fine. No sir, it missed the bone. I was lucky. Just a flesh wound. They kept me over night and discharged me this morning.

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Well, Thank you sir. (chuckles) No, I don't regard myself as a hero. Well, thank you sir, that's . . . that's very kind of you. You want me to (disbelief) come to the White House? Me? Oh, I'd love to. Ye . . . Yes sir, I . . . I do have a lover. We've been together 7 years. - Just a minute, I'll ask him. (covers phone) Do you want to have dinner with the president of the United States at the White House?

Todd: (Nelly) Me? Oh, silly. You know I don't have anything to wear. Everyone's seen me in that old chenille. I mean, God, I've got to get a whole new outfit. Shoes and Purse to match. (Danny throws pillow at Todd)

Danny: He'd love to come too. Are you sure - it's o.k.? - I mean, I've lived most of my life in a closet. And now, suddenly - Are you sure you want a homosexual and his lover having dinner with you in the white house. - I know this is 2007 and - - Yes sir. I would be honored. - thank you sir. I'll look forward to that. And, you too sir. Have a good evening. (hangs up) Thank you sir!

(jumps up. Excited.) Wow! Dinner at the White House. Yesterday no one knew who I was, and today - the President of the United States says I'm a hero. Can you imagine that?

Todd: Well, Mr. Hero. Don't forget Anderson Cooper called today. Here's his number. Oh, God. I don't know if I can handle all this success that's come into your life. Will you still love me when you're rich and famous?

Danny: How could I not . . . love you . . . (wraps his arms around Todd and kisses him)

Todd: Oh - by the way. Don't forget that package that came for you today. Fed Ex Special Delivery. It's on the table with the mail. Must be from another one of your fans. Can't

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imagine who it would be that could top the President wanting you for dinner. I'm tired, love. This has been a gruelling 24 hours for me and I'm ready for bed. Love you honey. (quickly kisses Danny)

Danny: Love you too.

(Todd exits stage right).

(Danny gathers mail from table, sits down stage left and opens the special delivery package as stage lights dim, except where Danny is reading. An offstage male voice speaks the words quietly as Danny Reads.)

Voice: Dear Faggot. I don't know what else to call you. I cannot find the words to express the shock, anger, disbelief, frustration and extreme disappointment I feel. To sit down and watch the national news and discover that my only son . . . is a faggot . . . a queer. I cannot begin to tell you how twisted up I felt inside seeing your face on television. My stomach felt the need to vomit. To see you, my son, attending a rally for homosexuals. To have you branded publicly for all the nation to see. To have it thrust in my face. My son is a queer. Do you know what this has done to your mother and myself? You disgraced us. We cannot even show our face on the street. That's all anyone in town can talk about. Did you know Danny Glovers is a queer? Have you no regard for our feelings? My God, what kind of a son have we raised? All the years that we as a family went to church . . . and Sunday School. My God! Did you not hear the lesson? Homosexuality is a sin. . . an abomination. God despises that action. You're going to be punished for this. Over and over it is written in the bible, that behaviour is sinful. Disgraceful. The word itself is disgusting. And now, to discover that my son is everything that I

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have despised.

As I look back over your life, there were times that I wondered, could you be . . . But no, I immediately dismissed those thoughts. Not my son. He's a man. A real man. Just like his father. Just like me. I watched you grow with pride . . . that young man who carried all my hopes and dreams for the future . . . that young man whom I carried on my shoulders as a child and ran through the fields with . . . That young man whom I coached in little league, and taught how to play football . . . I stood proudly in the stadium and cheered as you made one touchdown after another. Your teammates had such respect for you they elected you captain of the team. You were given a football scholarship to my alma mater. Your mother and I attended each and every game. And suddenly, in one brief moment . . . all those dreams were shattered.

I wished to God you never had been born. That I could have smothered you in that crib when you were but an infant. I looked on you with such pride. Now, I can't even stand the thought of ever seeing you again. I don't know what to say. I am so hurt . . . so disappointed . . . I just want to run away somewhere and hide. But, there's nowhere to run. All the world knows your face and I must live with this disgrace for the rest of my life. You've ruined our lives by your choices. May God have mercy on your soul. Perhaps some day He can forgive you. I know I never can.

Danny: (sits stunned, then begins to weep) Oh, Jesus. How much am I supposed to bear? They're the last people in the world I want to hurt. I love them so much. (shakes fist at ceiling in anger.) What the hell kind of world did you bring me into. I'm being torn apart inside. Oh God. First I save the president of the United States . . . Then I'm shot. Then I'm beat up by

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the police . . I'm fired from my job . . Anderson Cooper calls me and wants me on national t.v. and homophobes call and want to kill me . .then I'm a national hero invited to the White House by the President of the United States . .and my father writes me a letter beginning with Dear Faggot and tells me he wishes I had never been born. He wishes he would have smothered me in my crib had he known I was gay. . I've disgraced my family. I wish to God that bullet would have killed me. (Buries head in hands and sobs) Oh, God. Oh God . . This hurts so much . . Oh God.

End of Act 1

Harold: I've gotta' go to the bathroom.

Danny: Down the hallway, first door on the left.

(father exits.)

Todd: Guest towels are on the right. Hmmm . . well, that was pleasant.

Danny: Why did you stay with him all these years? His anger. His affairs . . What was it that kept you?

Mother: (sighs and shakes her head) I don't know . . I should have left him years ago

Finding out about his first affair destroyed any shred of love that I used to have for him.

He's always been a good provider . . I live in a beautiful home, there's always enough money for whatever I could want . .

Danny: Mom, those are only things . . where's the love? Where's the attachment?

Mother: Disappeared many years ago . . I'm old . . Do you know what it's like to be old, and fears of being alone? At my age, I can't find a job that would support me . . and divorce? That's out of the question. I'm catholic.

Danny: So you chose to live in misery? Because you're catholic? And afraid of being alone?

Mother: It's more than that . . much more than you know. You've got to excuse your father. He's . . he's even more difficult to live with since . . since he saw the doctor last week.

Danny: Dad went to he doctor? What's wrong.

Mother: (struggling to hold back the tears) Danny . . . your father has cancer . . prostate cancer.

Danny: They going to operate? Take it out?

Mother: No . . it's gone way beyond that. It's spread to his lungs . . and to his back.
For

years, I knew he had problems going to the bathroom . . but could I get him to see the
doctor . . (shaking head) No . . no . . he would never go.

Danny: Damn . . Much as I dislike the man, that's something I wouldn't wish upon my
worst enemy.

Todd: My uncle died like that . . lots of pain. Took a while to die . . I'm glad there are
med's I can take to help with my disease. But with a cancer like that . .(shakes his head)
It's a tough way to go.

Danny: how much longer?

Mother: We don't know . . . months, weeks, maybe a year . . we just don't know.

(toilet flush)

Father: (returning from the bathroom and seats himself at the table, placing napkin in his
lap) Where'd you get that . . that funny looking hose?

Danny: What hose?

Father: You know . . that thing hanging from your showerhead. Something your mother
would use .. but, God, I don't even want to think how you would use it.

Danny: How . . That shower has a clouded glass door that was closed. Private! How . .
you opened it, Dad. didn't you? You snooped in my house.

Father: O.K. . . so I'm curious . . what kind of life you lead . . I don't even want to go
there. I don't want to know what you do in your life.

Danny: Well, I guess you know something about me that you didn't know before, don't
you Dad.

Father: (angrily) Listen to me, Danny. I was married to your mother for 38 years. 38

years . . and not once did I ever fuck her in the ass. I think that's sick . . disgusting, and perverted.

Danny: (becoming angry) Let me tell you something Dad . . I have never fucked anyone.

I make love to them . . I make love with all my being . . all my heart and all my soul. I don't fuck anyone. But you, Dad . . You fuck everyone . . any woman with two legs.

Those three mistresses you had when I lived at home . . you fucked them. You fucked them in your bedroom when mom was gone.

Mother: Danny . . please

Danny: No mom . . you knew about them . . and god knows how many other women Dad fucked while away on business . . You think I didn't know . . Why? Why did you let him get away with it.

Father: You shut your god damned mouth.

Danny: Like hell I will . . let's all be honest here . . yea . . that's a douche attached to the shower . . and yes . . that's part of how I make love . . But you, Dad . . all you know how to do is fuck . . That's all you know how to do is fuck women . . and fuck mom. You never made love to her . . All these years, I never once heard you say those words 'I love you' . . never said them to Mom. Never said them to me. Can you love anyone but yourself Dad? Can you?

Harold: You're going to hell, son. AIDS is a curse, sent by God to kill all those who've gone against His word. You've got it too, don't you. You're gonna' die just like him; from AIDS. Aren't you.

Danny: Would that make a difference? In how you feel about me? If you knew I dying, would you take me in your arms and say: "son, I love you. Let's do all the things we never had chance to do. I'll be here for you. I'll support you any way I can."

Harold: Hell no! You don't deserve my . . my, my love.

Danny: What do I need to do to deserve . . your love. My God, dad. I've tried so hard to please you. Growing up in your family . . the standards you set. I tried so hard to meet them, and do you know what? Each time I met one, you moved the bar. You raised it. Nothing I did could ever please you. There was always something I . . I couldn't do. Not once did you say, son, I'm proud of you. I bust my ass for you, and it wasn't good enough. I wasn't good enough.

Harold: You're damned right, you weren't good enough. And now you're getting what you deserve. AIDS.

Danny: (throws napkin down and rises from the table. You fucking bastard. All my life I lived by your rules. Those were your rules in your house. Well, dad. I'm a man now; not some frightened little boy who runs when he hears his father speak. I'm a man. . and this is my house . . (walks behind Todd and places his hands on Todd's shoulders) and this is the man I love . . who is not . . dying of AIDS. He is living . . with AIDS. And he's getting all the love and support I know how to give him. He's the most important thing that's ever happened to me. I love him, Dad. Do you hear that? I love him. We've built a family. Todd and I . . WE are family. THIS is our home, a home built on love.

Harold: This is a house of sin. What kind of son did we raise.

Danny: Why must you be such a fucking bigot, Dad?

Father: (angrily rises from the table and approaches Danny) You watch your tongue, young man. I'm your father and I deserve some respect from you.

Danny: Respect?

Harold: You're damned right. I brought you into this world. I set the rules for this family.

Danny: You're wrong, dad. This is my family. You're in my home now, not yours. I set the rules in this house.

Harold: Family? You call this a family? Two faggots living together? That's a family?

Danny: You're God damned right, it's a family. I love Todd. And if mom had an illness like this, you wouldn't abandon her. Would you? I don't know. Maybe you would.

Harold: Love? Don't talk to me about love. Faggots don't love. What you guys do . . . it's disgusting. Repulsive. You make me sick to my stomach.

Danny: You don't know anything about love. The word scares you doesn't it dad. So often I wanted to hear you say, "I love you". I never heard it. Not from you . . . Not for mom . . . not for me. . . not for anyone. Go on, dad. Say it! Say, "I love you".

Harold: You don't deserve it.

Danny: Oh! So now a child doesn't deserve his father's love?

Harold: You're damned right. You earn it.

Danny: Earn it? I come into this world, helpless and naked as your child. And I've got to earn my father's love?

Harold: That's right, you earn it. You earn my love, just as I earned my father's love. You're lucky I didn't beat the hell out of you when you were a boy, just as he beat the hell out of me. That's love, boy. That's guidance. Spare the rod and spoil the child. If you'd read the bible, you'd know that. Your mother made one big mistake in raising you. She stood up for you when you were a kid. I didn't give you the discipline you needed. And now look at how you've turned out. (Looks at Edith) Do you see what kind of son you've got? Are you proud of that?

You don't know what life's all about, do you? You think life's a free ride. That everyone should run around and kiss your ass, saying I love you. I had to struggle for everything I've got. Every penny I earned by my sweat and blood.

Danny: (Rises and faces his father) No, mom. You don't need to answer that. You did nothing wrong in raising me. Yes, Dad. I'm proud of who I am, no thanks to you. I'm proud to be a faggott. A queer! Whether you want me as a son or not, is your choice. But I belong in this world and by by God, my being here, I'm going to make a difference in this world, and I'm here to stay. Whether you want me here or not, this faggot is here to stay.

Harold: I brought you into this world, and by God, I can take you out of this world. (Grabs a lamp and wrestles Danny to the floor, holding him down with one hand and raises the lamp to smash his son's head). I'll kill you, you son of a bitch. I'll kill you.

Edith: (Edith grabs lamp and wrestles it away. Screams) Stop! Stop it, the both of you. My God, what have we become. This is your son. He's our son, and you're trying to kill him. Why? Why? Why?

Act three opens with Danny receiving a phone call and learns his father is dying in the hospital and his death is imminent. Lights rise as he and a nurse enter the stage, his father unconscious in a hospital bed. "Your mother has been by his bed all night and just went to the cafeteria. I'll tell her you're here." "Oh . . . she said to give you this envelope if you arrived," she says as she exits. Samuel Barber's "Adagio for Strings" begins playing in the background as Danny wanders around the room and speaks to his father, expressing his pain of a lost childhood, lamenting the absence of love, the pain of his rejection and never having the father/son relationship he longed for. He sits in a chair near the bed and opens the envelope as the music continues. His father's words speak as he reads the letter,

"Dear Faggot.

I once called you those words in anger, in hatred, in fear, and yes, in ignorance. My life has changed dramatically since I wrote those words. I am dying . . . and I know it. I can feel the cancer eating away. In the silence . . . in the darkness when I am all alone, and I am all alone . . . I can feel the cancer eating away my life. Why am I all alone on my deathbed? Because I have never learned how to love . . . Not my friends, not your mother, and especially . . . never learned how to love you . . . my only son. Because of my inability to love, I have driven the most important people I know, out of my life. And now, I find myself alone. My life may be ending soon, but I need to speak the words in a letter, because I cannot speak them in person. All my life, when I have tried to say the words, "I love you", I freeze . . . I panic . . . and the words get stuck in my throat. My work was my god where all my energies went. I find it ironic that I have become a highly successful businessman who can talk about most anything . . . except those three important words, "I love you" get stuck in my throat and are never heard. Looking at my end, I'm aware I have failed . . . I have failed your mother in being the kind of husband she needed and deserved. And, I have failed you . . . to be the kind of father you needed and deserved. You did nothing to cause the pain I brought into your life. A man can only build a world with the tools that were given to him. Sadly, my father gave me flawed tools that lacked love. He never said those words, "I love you" to me. . . all he could do was find fault with everything I tried to do. I was never good enough . . . in his eyes. All my efforts and energies went into proving him wrong. I became very successful. I made a lot of money. I stood at the pinnacle of my life to prove him wrong. I was raised to believe that being homosexual was wrong. Believing what my church told me, about you, my son . . . was the source of my hatred . . . my anger . . . and most of all . . . my ignorance . . . I knew nothing about you, who you are, and who you have become. I chose to be ignorant, angry and filled with condemnation. It is only when death, that great equalizer, stares you in the face, and asks the question, "Has your life been worthwhile? Is the world a better place because you lived?" A poet gave me the answer I needed, "*Silence oe'r the grave is forever. If you love someone, tell them now.*" Those words come difficult for me, but before it is too late, I need you to know . . . I love you so very, very much . . . and I am very proud to have you as my son. I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me for failing you. I cannot undo the past. But I can leave you with these final words, I love you. . . . Dad.

As the letter ends, the father's hand raises from the bed. Danny, seeing the hand raising, reaches out and their fingers touch, as in Michelangelo's Creation of Adam. The words of the letter need to be choreographed to Barber's Adagio for Strings crescendo. The father's hand drops at the abrupt moment of silence in the music. Danny screams in anguish, climbing on top of his father's body in the bed, shaking him, crying "God damned you Dad . . . don't leave me . . . we're so close . . . this is what I've always wanted . . . Dad! Dad!!! He collapses on the body, sobbing as Barber's music ends the silence with its quiet finish. The spotlight on the father and son continues to get smaller as Danny sobs on his father's body . . . then just a black stage, hearing the sobs.

Please visit my website: www.dearfaggot.com for script and more information on this work in progress.

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