



Scripts.com

# The Normal Heart

By Larry Kramer

1

(SEAGULLS CALLING)

(WAVES CRASHING)

**MAN:**

(HORN BLARES)

**MAN:**

We are now arriving at Fire Island Pines.  
All right, welcome to Fire Island, everybody.  
Please take care, exit slowly.  
Those steps can be wet.  
Also double-check  
you have all your luggage...  
Have a good day.  
- Hey, Weeks!  
- Hey, honey.  
How you doing?  
We're doing great.  
Here we are!  
What are you guys doing?  
Hairy is out. Your turn, teddy bear.  
No. No. I love my teddy.  
- Calvin Klein would not approve.

**- NED:**

The baseball game is on  
and my summer has officially begun.  
The thing is he actually means it.  
- Hey, baby.  
- How are ya?  
- You want a beer?  
- Nah, I've already had a couple.  
Nice stripes, Lieutenant. Hot.  
Oh, please. Captain.  
Just got back from the reserves.  
You know what they say.  
Once a month, I get to play a real man.  
Ooh. I haven't seen you at the gym lately.  
Bruce!  
- Your turn, Bruce.  
- What? What?  
Brucey, please.  
Don't embarrass our house at the beach, hon.

Uh-oh. (SIGHS)  
You gotta do it.  
You know what they say, Ned.  
If you can't beat 'em,  
Join 'em!  
That's my guy-  
Craig was miserable  
when you weren't interested.  
Now look, he's got Robert Redford.  
It shows you there is a god.  
How's John?  
- John?  
- John.  
Oh, John! No, I'm with Gregory now.  
We're celebrating our 15th month anniversary.  
Fifteen... That's a long time for you, Mickey.  
Oh, please! We're lovers and we live together.  
It's not like we're faithful to each other, too.  
He's not even Jewish.  
Don't tell my rabbi.  
(MEN GRUNTING)  
- Oh, my God.  
- (BOTH LAUGHING)  
- Hey, Weeks! You suck!  
- (POP MUSIC PLAYING)  
Why do you even come here anymore?  
We don't want you.  
(MEN LAUGHING)  
You made us look terrible in your novel.  
Look around you. Sex is liberating.

**NED:**

makes finding love impossible.  
Do not put your failure to find someone  
on the rest of us.

**BRUCE:**

- Ow!  
- Oh, jeez.  
(COUGHING)  
Oh, my God!  
(COUGHS)  
Guys!  
Hey, what happened?

- Are you okay?  
- I'm okay.  
I just got a little light-headed.  
I got myself up. I'm fine.  
I think I just got a little dizzy.  
Does he seem okay?

**MEN:**

Happy birthday to you  
Happy birthday, dear Craig!  
Happy birthday to you!  
Blow!  
He's good at that!  
(ALL LAUGHING)  
(ALL CHEERING)  
(COUGHING)  
(UPBEAT MUSIC PLAYING)  
I fucking love this place!  
(CHEERING)  
(MUSIC CONTINUES)  
(YOU MAKE ME FEEL PLAYING)  
Hey, Ned!  
Come on. Please?  
(THUNDER RUMBLING)  
(FAINT MOANING)  
(SIGHS)  
I sold you a ceramic pig once  
at Maison France on Bleecker Street.  
I'm Sanford.  
Yes, I remember.  
Somebody I was friends with then  
collected pigs  
and you had the biggest pig  
I'd ever seen outside a real pig.  
(CHUCKLES)  
They just keep getting bigger  
and won't go away.  
I'm her 20th case.  
And six of them are dead.  
(DOOR OPENS)  
Hey, Ned, won't be a minute.  
Hey, Buzzy, I didn't know you worked here.  
- (FAINT WHIRRING)

- **BROOKNER:**

Uh, Ned Weeks.

I spoke to you after The Times article.

Come in. Take your clothes off.

I only came to ask some questions.

- You are gay, aren't you?

- Yes.

Take your clothes off. Don't be nervous.

I've seen more men than you have.

**BROOKNER:**

I don't know.

I've never seen or heard of anything like this.

Have you had any of the symptoms?

Most of the shit The Times said,  
amoebas, gonorrhoea, hepatitis.

You don't know what it's been like  
since the sexual revolution.

What makes you think I don't?

Any fever, night sweats, weight loss?

Don't I wish.

No.

And purple lesions? Open your mouth.

It's a cancer.

There's a strange reaction  
in the immune system.

It's collapsed.

Won't fight, so the diseases  
most of my patients are coming down with  
are brought on by germs  
that wouldn't hurt a baby.

Ticklish.

At least not a baby in New York City, anyway.

I mean, the immune system  
is the system we know the least about.

So where's this big mouth I hear you've got?

Is big mouth a symptom?

No. It's a cure.

This seems to only be happening to gay men.

Buzzy says you are well-known  
in the gay community

and not afraid to say what you think.

- (DOOR OPENS)

- I can't find any gay leaders,

and I call gay organizations,  
no one ever calls me back.  
Dr. Brookner, no one with half a brain  
gets involved with gay politics.  
- There's no room for criticism.  
- What's your criticism?  
I hate that we play victim when many of us,  
most of us don't have to.  
Then you're exactly what's needed now.  
Maybe they're just waiting for someone  
to lead them.  
I don't want to lead them.  
What exactly are you trying to get me to do?  
Tell gay men to stop having sex.  
Do you think that this cancer  
is sexually transmitted?  
I think it is, yes.  
Can I prove it yet? No.  
Do you realize that you're talking about  
millions of men  
who have singled out promiscuity  
as their principal political agenda?  
How do you deal with that?  
Tell them they may die.  
- Where?  
- Down the hall! Down the hall!

**NED:**

It's more complicated than that.  
They think sex is all they have.  
Mr. Weeks, if having sex can kill you,  
doesn't anyone with half a brain  
stop fucking?  
You can go.  
I'm not finding what I'm looking for here.  
- (ELEVATOR BELL DINGS)  
- (DOORS SLAM)

**BRUCE:**

**MICKEY:**

- Where? Where?  
- Right in that room.  
- Easy! Easy!

- Just put him up on the table.

Up here.

Just try to hold him.

- Baby!

- Easy! Be still.

- **BUZZY:**

- (MUFFLED GROANING)

We were meeting him outside.

We turned the corner, he just collapsed.

(TIRES SCREECHING)

(HONKING)

**MAN:**

Hey, get the fuck outta the street!

(PANTING)

Baby!

Oh, my God.

Help!

- (SIREN BLARING)

- (SOBBING)

- Who's the lover?

- **BRUCE:**

- What's your name?

- Bruce Niles.

- Brookner, I need a room immediately.

- (MUFFLED SCREAMING)

Niles, you were Reinhardt's boyfriend?

Yes, ma'am. How do you know that?

He died three weeks ago.

(DOOR SLAMS)

(SIRENS ECHOING)

(SIGHS)

They wouldn't even let me say goodbye.

Not even let me kiss him goodbye.

He's dead?

I'm so sorry.

It can happen this fast?

N just did.

We have to do something.

No one else will.

**MICKEY:**

**MORTON:**

on the basis of 46 cases!

You wanted to know what I think.

This is what I think.

You are all going to infect each other.

(CLAMORING)

Now only a few of you have.

Unfortunately, we can't tell yet which ones.

Long before we isolated the hepatitis viruses,

we knew about the diseases they caused

and how they got around!

Where are the medical journals? The Times?

I sent my first report to the medical journals

over a year ago.

Excuse me, how do you know

what you're looking for,

real quick,

if you don't know what you're looking for?

I'm sorry. I guess that's a dumb question.

No, it isn't.

It's the smartest question of all

and the hardest one to answer.

Doesn't common sense tell you

you should cool it for a while?

(ALL LAUGHING)

(CLAMORING)

**NED:**

It doesn't leave much to look forward to.

What if it turns out that you're wrong?

Let her speak!

The worst that could happen

would be that you cooled it for a while.

No! Excuse me! Excuse me!

That is not...

Excuse me.

That is not the worst that will have happened.

Guys will become frightened of sex,

they will lose our self-respect

that we fought very, very hard for.

We will be scapegoated worse than ever.

The world will think we're carriers

and the moral majority



will have even more of a field day.

(CLAMORING)

**MAN:**

until that bitch on wheels is gone.

Wait! I see more cases each week

than the week before.

Half of all my patients die.

Okay, I hope she winds this up, 'cause

I've got a tiny little orgy in New Rochelle.

Where's the health department?

Where's the Mayor?

Shut the fuck up, John.

Oh, you shut the fuck up, hon!

What were the numbers?

(VOICES OVERLAPPING)

Is every gay meeting like this?

Half these people just showed up to get laid.

**NED:**

We're starting a group!

We're starting a health crisis group.

We're gonna meet here again.

Next time bring some fucking food!

**TOMMY:**

- Welcome to gay politics.

- (ELEVATOR BELL DINGS)

(CLEARS THROAT) Yeah. I'm very late for  
an important meeting with Craig Claiborne.

He's expecting me.

(TELEPHONES RINGING)

(TYPEWRITERS CLACKING)

Hi, Felix Turner.

- And you are?

- My name's Ned Weeks.

You're very cute.

You caught me at a rough moment, all right?

I have a deadline.

The First Lady's coming to town.

I've been told you're gay.

And you might be able to help me  
get some vital information in The Times.

You've been told?

And who was it who told you?

Oh, honey, everybody's talking about it.

(CHUCKLES)

Why does everyone gay  
think that I run The New York Times?

I can't help you with this.

I'm sorry to hear that.

What would you suggest I do?

(CHUCKLES) Take your pick.

I got 23 parties, 37 new restaurants,  
12 new discos.

Listen, I can't get anyone here  
to write another article.

I've talked to half a dozen reporters  
and the guy who worked on the first piece.

Mr. Leather? Yeah, no.

No one here will write about it, and I can't.

Look, we're very compartmentalized.

You wouldn't want science  
to write about sweaters, would you?

It's a very peculiar feeling  
having to go out and seek support  
from the straight world for something gay.

(WHISPERING) I wouldn't know about that.

I just write about gay designers  
and gay discos and gay chefs  
and gay models and gay rock stars  
and gay celebrities and gay everything.

I just don't call them gay.

Isn't it time you start?

(SCOFFS)

- Look, I really do have a deadline.

- Hmm.

- And you wouldn't want me to get fired.

- Hmm.

Would you?

Guys like you can be a pain in the ass.

- You in the book?

- Yes.

**NED:**

Hi, give to gay cancer?

No? Hi, give to gay cancer?

Hi, sir...

Hi, give to gay cancer?  
There's a cancer in the gay community.  
Can you give to gay cancer?  
There's a crisis in our community right now.  
We could really...  
We could use a little help.  
- No?  
- I think you could be a little less aggressive.  
Less... We've tried that.  
Can you give to cancer in our community?  
Hi, give to gay..-  
Hi, give to gay cancer?  
(SNIFFLES)

**BRUCE:**

and I had never told her I was gay.  
I just told her that Craig had died.  
I think she knew.  
I think somehow mothers always know.  
Doesn't spending \$5 million  
on a house frighten you?  
It scared the shit out of me  
even having you handling my finances.  
You can have a house anytime you want,  
which reminds me,  
your account needs more money.  
You're not doing too badly.  
I miss you being in the movie business.  
I like movies.  
Do I detect a note of approval  
from the big brother that called me Lemon?  
I don't want a house.  
Then why have you been searching  
in the country for so long for?  
No fun living in it alone.  
This Bruce,  
is he someone you're seeing?  
(SCOFFS) I see him. He doesn't see me.  
Ben, could your law firm take this on for free?  
What's it called? Pro bono?  
We started an organization. I told you.  
There's this new disease...  
Now this sounds like just another excuse  
to keep from writing.

Why Can't you just say yes?  
I told you, because we have a committee  
that decides that kind of a thing.  
But you're the senior partner  
and I'm your brother.  
Hey, Mario. How's Homer?  
If you're not gonna help,  
I'm gonna have to find somebody else.  
- Well, you're more than free to do that.  
- I don't want to do that.  
I want my big brother's  
fancy, famous, big-time major law firm  
to be the first straight New York law firm  
to do pro bono work for a gay cause.  
I would be real proud of that, and you.  
I'll ask my partners' approval  
at the next meeting.  
I'll lobby them.  
You don't sound like a very sure vote.  
Okay?  
You're getting better at it.

**BROOKNER:**

new patients a week.  
I've got seven in ICU.  
The whole hospital only has room for 30.  
I've had to admit some of them  
under other illnesses. That's a no-no.  
I've got 20 in private rooms they can't afford.  
Okay, what about the guys who don't  
have health insurance? Artists, actors?  
I've got eight of them in another ward  
where I shouldn't put them.  
Why don't you wear gloves and a face mask?  
I never have and I never will, and I'm still here.  
Why is all the food sitting outside their rooms  
like this? It's getting cold.  
It's always cold because the appropriate staff  
won't bring it into the rooms,  
so it sits and rots until one of my staff can.

**SANFORD:**

Right there. Yeah.  
Park there. Yeah. Right through the tunnel.

Take the tunnel. We'll take the book back.  
I know him. Can I go inside with you?  
Only if you wear all the protective shit.  
If you don't, I don't.

**SANFORD:**

Go the other way.  
No, are you listening to me?  
Are you listening to me? Go back.  
Hi, Sanford.  
You see it? Take the tunnel.  
Go ahead. Ride straight through.  
How are we doing, soldier?  
I want my dog.  
Can you please bring me my dog?  
He won't be able to live without me.  
I want my dog.  
I want my dog.  
Go ahead. That's right. Good, good.  
No, take the book back.  
Right there. Go park. Park right there.  
Can you please bring me my dog?  
He won't know how to live without me.  
(TV BUZZING)  
Don't bother.  
Who's going to bring me my dog?  
His name is Skip.  
He'll come when you call him.  
Please. (GASPING)  
I miss him.  
(SOBBING)  
I miss him.

**BROOKNER:**

Your first boyfriend  
you were gonna spend your whole life with.  
(DOOR OPENS)  
- Excuse me.

**- MAN:**

You're the TV guy.  
Please go to room 407 and fix it.  
No, I'm not gonna do that.  
Fix the TV! It's your fucking job.

My union says I don't gotta risk my life  
for some contagious fairy.  
If I have to go in there, then I fucking quit.  
So what exactly has your side been doing?  
(DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES)  
(MUSIC PLAYING)  
(DOORBELL RINGING)  
- Hi.  
- Hey.  
Thanks.  
- You want some of this? Beer?  
- Oh, beer is fine. Thanks.  
Oh. Hey, pooch.  
- Her name's Sam.  
- Hi, Sam.  
You know, I really used to like high tech.  
I'm tired of it now.  
I think I want chintz back again.  
- Don't be insulted.  
- Uh...  
I'm not.  
I want chintz back again, too.  
- So, here we are.  
- Mmm-hmm.  
Two fellas who want chintz back again.  
I guess this really is a date.  
I'm starving.  
Are you glad I'm here?  
Oh, I'm pleased as punch you're here.  
You're very good-looking.  
What are you doing here?  
- You think you're bad-looking or something?  
- Mmm.  
- Where you from?  
- I'm from Oklahoma.  
I left home at 18, put myself through...  
What, you want to dance?  
Put myself through college.  
My dad worked at the refinery in West Tulsa,  
and my mom was a waitress  
in a luncheonette in Walgreens.  
It's amazing, isn't it, how a kid  
comes out of all that to wind up on The Times  
dictating taste and style to the entire world.

And we were just starting to talk so nicely.

Talking's not my problem.

Shutting up's my problem.

(CHUCKLES)

Why do you write

all that fancy ball-gown bullshit?

I bet you gobble it up every day.

(SIGHS)

I know 10 people who have died.

When I came to you, it was only one.

I'm sorry.

Is that why you agreed to this date?

(SCOFFS)

Fork on the left,

knife on the right.

Did you know that Hitler's final solution

to eliminate the Polish Jews

was first mentioned in The Times?

It was on page 28,

on page six of The Washington Post.

They were both owned by Jews,

their very own people.

Scholars are finally writing honestly about it,

and it's damning to everyone.

Where was the Christian churches?

The Pope? Churchill? Roosevelt?

A few words from any of them

would have put Hitler on notice.

Dachau was open in 1933.

Where the fuck was everybody?

This is turning out to be

a very romantic evening.

You've never had a lover, have you?

I suppose you've had quite a few?

I had a very good one for a number of years,

thank you.

He was older than I was

and he found someone younger.

- You're looking for a father?

- No. I'm not looking for a father.

God. You're relentless.

Okay.

That's yours.

Everybody had a million reasons

for not getting involved.

The American Jews knew

- exactly what was going on.

- (LAUGHS)

Can you imagine if every Jew

had marched on Washington proudly, huh?

Ned.

You don't remember me, do you?

It was at the baths a few years ago.

(MUSIC PLAYING)

**ANNOUNCER:**

See what we're all about

and what we have to offer.

Man's Country is a full facility,

multi-level complex

that's designed

to feature something for everyone.

Come to Man's Country to develop your body

or a friendship with somebody else 's.

Visit us once

and you'll come again and again.

You would have thought I was applying

for the CIA the way you looked at me.

And then what happened?

**FELIX:**

You couldn't even open your eyes.

You told me your real name was Alexander.

(GROANS)

I asked what you did, and you said

something like you tried a number of things,

and I asked if that included love.

That's when you said,

I have to get up early in the morning." Yeah.

Men do not naturally not love.

They learn not to.

I think you're a bluffer.

How could I not remember you?

(CHUCKLES) I don't know.

It was very dark.

Do you think we could start over?

Yeah.

(GRUNTING)



(PANTING)

(MOANING)

(PANTING)

(MOANING)

**NED:**

I thought I was the only gay guy there.

I swear to God.

I went to this shrink who tried to change me.

Now they have Gay Weeks there,  
and they throw the best dances of anyone.

(LAUGHING)

Imagine being able to dance  
cheek to cheek with your boyfriend  
during your bright college days.

Did you ever sleep with a woman?

- Hey.

- Her name was

- Delilah.

- Delilah? (LAUGHING)

She was a stand-in on this movie I wrote.

She was very nice, pretty,  
always smiling at me.

So I asked a straight friend to explain it to me.

I thought I knew,

but I just wanted to make sure.

(LAUGHING)

And I had her to dinner  
and afterwards,  
what I deemed to be a suitable moment,  
because I'd been communicating  
with it down there,

"Are you ready?

Are you absolutely certain you're ready?"

And when it appeared,

Abercrombie was ready,

I picked her up, very Rhett Butler,  
and carried her to my bed.

- Where I couldn't get it up.

- Oh!

- But

- I can certainly relate to that.

In the middle of the night,

I woke up with this gigantic erection.

God knows how.

So I shake her shouting,

"Please, stick it in for me, Delilah." I was...

I was afraid it would go away before I could,  
while I was hunting for the right place  
to put it.

And she did and I did and Abercrombie did.

(LAUGHING)

Ugh...

The next morning, I woke up  
and I, who had been under the spell of this  
shrink who was determined to change me,  
rushed into his office,  
and I, who had been fucking with fellows  
since the seventh grade,  
hysterically, at the age of 32 proclaimed,  
"Dr. Gillespie, I am no longer a virgin!"

(CHUCKLES)

Aw.

(KISSING)

(DOOR OPENS)

**HENRY:**

- Go ahead.

- So I just go over and say hello?

I told him I invited you

and we went to Yale together.

It's my farewell party. What's he gonna do?

Let's go.

(GUARD CLEARS THROAT)

His honor would like you to get lost.

- This is my friend, Ned Weeks.

- Yeah, we know who he is.

Mr. Mayor! We need your help!

There's this new disease.

You must have heard about it.

We need your help badly!

Get off me, you pigs! This is America!

Mr. Mayor! We're dying!

Okay, this is what Ned wrote for us  
to send out.

"I am sick of guys moaning that giving up  
careless sex until this blows over..."

NED ". "...is worse than death.

"I am sick of guys  
that can only think with their cocks.  
"I am sick of closeted gays.  
"It's 1982 now, guys.  
When you gonna come out?  
"By 1983, you could be dead."  
(MURMURING)  
- That's nice.  
- You're crazy.  
Am I, Bruce? Do you really think so?  
Aren't we supposed to  
elect a president tonight?  
Yes.  
We can't tell people  
how to live their lives, Ned.  
The entire gay political movement is fucking.  
- Hi.  
- Hi.  
I'm very interested in starting up  
some sort of services for the patients.  
We've gotta start talking about them.  
Also, there are a lot  
of very scared people out there  
and they're desperate for information.  
- I'd like to start a hotline.  
- Oh.  
- Who's he?  
- Ooh, he does not know who I am yet.  
His name is Tommy Boatwright.  
In real life, he is a hospital administrator.  
Uh, he's here to help,  
- and he's a Southern bitch.  
- (ALL LAUGHING)  
Mr. Boatwright, Bruce Niles.  
- Nice to meet you.  
- My pleasure.  
- You're very handsome.

- **MAN:**  
(FAINT MUSIC PLAYING)  
What the fuck is this?  
Was this your idea, Ned?  
- I'm looking. What am I not seeing?  
- Keep looking.

What we put for our return address.

Do you mean because the word "gay"  
is on the envelope?

Fucking-A, yes, instead of just our initials.  
We can't send these out.

Excuse me,

if we want anybody to show up for this dance,  
we have to get these out tonight.

We could go through and scratch out  
the word "gay" with a magic marker.

- Oh, honey, 10,000 times?

- Why not?

Bruce, I have sympathy for kids living at home  
on Long Island with their parents,

but the guys who are getting these, I mean...

Look at you. You live at home. You live alone.

You own your own apartment.

Your mother lives in another state.

Okay, what about my mailman?

Oh, you don't expect me  
to take you seriously.

- Yes, I do.

- Okay, ladies, behave.

Look, it's getting late  
and we still haven't elected a president.

Neddy, I think that it should be Bruce.

Everybody knows him,  
everybody likes him and everybody...

Because he's popular  
and everybody's afraid of me?

**ALL:**

I mean, look at him. He's gorgeous.

And all the kids on Christopher Street  
and Fire Island,

they'll feel a little bit more comfortable  
following him.

- Just like high school.

- Yes!

All right. All those in favor of Bruce Niles  
as our first president, raise their hand.

I don't think I want this.

Oh, come on. You're gorgeous  
and we're all gonna follow you.

Fuck you. I accept.

Well, fuck you. Congratulations.

(CHEERING)

(TRUMPET PLAYING)

Felix, let's move somewhere far away,  
just the two of us together on a desert island.  
Don't you dare stop for one single second  
what you're doing.

I appreciate you not yelling at me  
about what The Times isn't doing  
and my not being more political.

Why don't you?

It's a relief not having  
to have to talk politics to someone.

- That's not the reason.

- No?

It's because you're too good to be true.  
Because I've been waiting for a lover like you  
my whole life,  
and you haven't showed up until now,  
and I'm scared shitless  
that I'm gonna do something to fuck it up.

- Am I crazy?

- Of course.

That's why I'm here.

Now we're getting warm.

(FORGET ME NOTS PLAYING)

(APPLAUSE)

Did I look okay?

Could you tell  
that I was wearing all this makeup?  
You looked great.

- **NED:**

- (HUFFS)

Can we just forget about this?

I'm all right.

And if I'm not, I don't want to know,  
because no one will hire me,  
and if I can't work, I just as soon be dead.

I haven't lost any weight.

I can still cover it up.

- I told you not to tell him.

- Sorry.

You're already afraid to kiss me?

That's not true.

(CHUCKLES LIGHTLY)

It's okay. I'm afraid to let you.

I love you.

I'll walk him down.

(DOOR OPENS)

(DOOR CLOSES)

**BRUCE:**

he's the third guy I've been with.

Reinhardt, Craig,

and I don't know what I'll do if Albert has this.

You're gonna fight.

We'll fight together.

You're my best friend, Ned Weeks.

You're my best friend

and I've never met anyone like you before.

- What do you mean "like me"?

- Like you meaning...

Where I'm from, I mean, I didn't even

see a Jew until I was in the army,

let alone a man that was smart, funny.

(CHUCKLES)

Decently good-looking.

My friends stopped hanging out with me

because they say I depress them.

So be it.

And you,

you don't look that Jewish.

Well, you don't look gay, so I guess

we could both pass for white people.

(LAUGHING)

(CHUCKLES LIGHTLY)

I love Albert.

Bruce, look at me.

I love him.

Albert's gonna make it.

And what if he doesn't?

Let's get you home.

(DISTANT SIREN WAILING)

(BRUCE RETCHING)

- I'm a mess.

- Yeah.

(PANTING)

(RUNNING WATER)

- Classy moment.

- Yeah.

(BREATHING HEAVILY)

(THUDDING)

(GROANS)

Okay.

(BREATHING HEAVILY)

When I finally get you where I want you,  
I don't want you anymore.

Hey, Bruce, I'm in love, too.

(DISTANT SIREN WAILING)

Holy shit!

Queen control.

It really works when it wants to.

(INDISTINCT CONVERSATIONS)

Oh, hey, Felix, this is Dick Lombardo.

Hi.

I finally got us someone on our board  
who isn't a disco dummy.

Well, maybe tonight.

- I'll see you.

- Nice to meet you.

**NED:**

(I WILL SURVIVE PLAYING)

(FEEDBACK)

(MUSIC STOPS)

(ALL GROANING)

We are all so happy you joined us tonight!

(ALL CHEERING)

We are proving that we are more  
than just looks, brains, talent and heart!

Together, we raised  
more than any gay group ever in this city!

And I want to call over Mr. Ned Weeks.

(CHEERING)

Don't be shy!

We did it!

We will now reveal  
just how much we raised together.

In three, two, one.

\$53,000!

(CHEERING LOUDLY)

MANI \$53,000!

Gay Men's Health Crisis, come on up!

Felix, honey, come up please. Come up.

I love you.

Let's dance!

(MUSIC RESUMES)

(PIANO PLAYING)

**MEN:**

The man I love

And he'll be big and strong

The man I love

And when he comes my way

I'll do my best

To make him stay

He'll look at me and smile

I'll understand

And in a little while

He'll take my hand

And though it seems absurd

I know we both

Won't say a word

Maybe I shall meet him someday

Maybe Monday

Maybe not

Still I'm sure to meet him one day

Imagine if we had this when we were young.

No fear, no shame.

Maybe Tuesday will be my...

I was imagining all those years with you.

He'll build a little home

Just meant for two

From which I'll never roam

Who would, would you?

And so all else above

I'm waiting for the man I love

Felix Turner,

would you like to move in with me?

Yes.

- Yes?

- Yesterday.

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Yes! Yes!



(WOMEN CHEERING)

I'm waiting for the man

I love

**NED:**

waiting for whatever it is to set us off.

(LABORED BREATHING)

Come on. We're almost there.

**NED:**

doesn't scare the shit out of you,  
gay men may have no future here on Earth.

Our continued existence  
depends on just how angry you can get.

- (BELL DINGS)

- (POUNDING ON DOOR)

They turned us away  
from four emergency rooms.

- Come in!

- I think he's lost his mind!

- Ned, where can I take him?

- Put him on the couch there. I'll call Emma!

- God damn it!

- I'll get some water.

- **NED:**

- A couple hours.

(LABORED BREATHING)

**NED:**

I'm glad you asked me that question.

What do I think?

I know that the government  
is intentionally ignoring this epidemic.

You're accusing the government  
of the United States

of a conspiracy to murder all gay men?

Yes.

Yes, you can say that.

Yes, Sarabeth, I am. Yes.

That is a powerful accusation.

This is an epidemic and it's being ignored  
by the United States government.

- Intentionally?

- Intentionally being ignored.

This is a national emergency.

This is an epidemic. It's a plague!

You can't go on national TV and  
accuse the government of murder, Ned.

Why not?

Because one day,

we're gonna get money, research, grants.

Congress still hasn't appropriated a dime.

The Mayor's still... On and on!

Ned, when you go public, you have no right  
to speak for this organization

unless we have approved

what you have to say in advance.

You know, in point of fact,

you aren't even an officer of this organization,  
and you shouldn't be speaking for us at all!

Thank you for sharing that with me, Dick.

(THEME MUSIC PLAYING)

Why do you think the city has been so slow to  
acknowledge and deal with this emergency?

(SCOFFS)

You're implying that the city's recognized  
and acknowledged this emergency, Malcom.

- It has not.

- Why not, do you think?

'Cause the Mayor is gay and he's scared  
shitless out of his panties it'll blow his cover.

(OBJECTS CLATTERING)

- **MAN:**

- Are we still rolling?

(TONE BEEPS)

You can't tell me what to say  
when I'm speaking for myself.

Bullshit. They all know you're one of us.

It is totally and politically incorrect  
to call someone gay

who does not self-identify as being gay.

I know it's been that way forever,

but something different is going on here now.

We're dying.

The Mayor, he's a personal friend of yours.

You want him to appoint you a judge.

Do you have a little conflict of interest going on here?

I told you. I sent him a memo.

- When?

- Through channels.

- When?

- He'll answer me.

When? There's 110 new cases this month!

Still, no meeting with our gay mayor.

No meeting with his gay assistant!

What, do I embarrass you, Bruce?

Yes. You do.

Yeah, you get more with honey than with vinegar, babe.

God, no one's told me that one, Tommy.

No, obviously they haven't.

I don't believe that bullshit anyway.

We are in over our heads

with the patients we're trying to help.

Tommy, will you please read this report out loud for Ned?

**TOMMY:**

25 crisis counselors

"to help the newly diagnosed in whatever needs that they might have.

"We have 12 group leaders

"who meet with these counselors at least once a week to go over their clients.

"There are now 17 volunteer social workers, psychologists and/or psychiatrists.

"We helped draw up 75 wills last..."

Seventy-five, Bruce.

You used to be a fighter once.

- Did you like being in the Green Berets?

- Yes. I loved it.

Have you completely forgotten how to fight?

Don't tell me how to fight.

I just fight differently than you do.

- I haven't seen your way yet.

- No?

Bruce, Albert may be dying.

You son of a bitch!

You say another word about him...

Relax.

And you,

you have no right being on this board unless  
you put pressure on your friend, the Mayor.

That's why I asked you to join us  
in the first place and you know it.

(PANTING)

- **BEN:**

- Why not?

No, you get your free legal work from my firm.  
I'm not gonna be on your board of directors.

**NED:**

You don't have to do a thing.

That is just an evasion.

If you thought this was a straight disease...

**BEN:**

you being gay.

**NED:**

One of these days I'm gonna get you to agree  
that over 20 million men and women  
in this country  
don't require the services of a psychiatrist.  
Look, try to understand.

You know, I read stuff. I see TV.

Guys in leather, chains, dresses, high heels.

You know, I say to myself, "This isn't Ned."

You know the media

always dramatizes the most extreme.

You guys have a dreadful image problem.

Well, that's why it's so important

to have people like you supporting us.

You already have your dignity.

**BEN:**

I've got an important meeting.

Do you? How important?

I'm asking for your support.

In every area I consider important,

you have my support.

And the only area that I consider important,

I don't have your support at all.  
In some place deep down inside you,  
you still think I'm sick, don't you?  
I think you've adjusted to life pretty well.  
All things considered.  
I saw how unhappy you were.  
So were you!  
You wound up going to shrinks, too.  
We grew up side by side.  
We both felt the same about Mom and Pop.  
I'll agree to the fact that  
I have any number of awful character traits,  
but not to the fact that whatever awful things  
they did to us made me sick and gay  
while you stayed straight and healthy.  
We don't all react the same way to the thing.  
So you became a lawyer  
and I became a writer.  
Well, we have a difference of opinion  
over theory.  
But your theory  
turns me into a man from Mars.  
My theory doesn't do that to you.  
Are you suggesting I did something wrong  
in sending you into therapy so young?  
I didn't know  
you were gonna stay there forever.  
I didn't think that I had done anything wrong  
until you sent me there.  
Ben, you mean more to me  
than anyone in the whole world.  
You always have.  
Ben, you've gotta say it.  
- Say what?  
- I am the same as you.  
Just say it. Say it.  
No.  
You're not.  
I'm not gonna say it.  
Every time I lose this fight, it hurts more.  
I'm going home.  
Oh, come on, Lemon.  
I still love you.  
Sarah still loves you. The cat still loves you.

This is not a joke!  
You have my love, my legal advice,  
my financial supervision.  
I can't give you the courage  
to stand up to me and say  
you don't give a flying fuck  
about what I think!  
Everybody's oppressed by somebody else  
in some form or another.  
Most of us learn to fight against it despite  
people's opinions without the help of others.  
Now stop trying to wring  
some kind of admission of guilt out of me!  
Agreeing that you were born  
just the same as I was born  
isn't gonna save your dying friends.  
That is exactly what is going to save  
my dying friends!  
You make it sound like I'm the enemy!  
I am beginning to think that  
you and your straight world are our enemy!  
I am furious with you  
and every goddamn doctor  
who made me feel it was sick to love a man!  
I am trying to understand  
why nobody gives a shit that we're dying!  
\$5 million for a house?  
We can't even get 27 cents from the city.  
I know 43 guys who have died  
and you say it's my cause, not yours?  
You still think I'm sick!  
I simply cannot allow it  
for one single second longer.  
I will not speak to you again  
until you accept me as your equal!  
Your healthy equal! Your brother!  
(SIGHS)  
(DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES)  
Yeah, be careful with that, boys.  
That is a precious antique.  
- Easy.  
- Mmm-hmm.  
Don't you think  
we should put that in the grand salon?

Do we have a basement?

That's where it should go.

Bella, I think it's time

we moved your filthy mouth above ground.

- (LOUD KISSING)

- I'll decorate tomorrow.

Just shove it all in there the best you can.

(PURRS)

- Yeah, okay. Knock it off, both of you.

- (LAUGHING)

(KNOCKING AT DOOR)

Excuse me.

Yes? Hi.

Hi.

My name is Estelle,

and my best friend Harvey died last night.

We went everywhere together, you know?

Like Broadway and the Rockettes

and the ice skating.

He was a beautiful skater.

(TEARFULLY) I'm a klutz, but he didn't care.

We had so much fun.

(WHIMPERS)

Damn it, I want to do something,

even though all my lesbian friends say,

"What have you guys ever done for us?"

But I don't care.

This is for Harvey.

(SOBBING) Please.

Tell me you can use me for something.

- (SOBBING)

- Oh.

I need a hotline director.

Do you think you can do that?

- I don't know how.

- I don't either.

Hey.

Let me buy you a cup of coffee

and we'll figure this out, okay?

Okay.

(SNIFFLES)

- So, you want to set up here?

- Yeah, this is good, let's do it.

What are you doing?

- **MAN:**

- So?

This is the new  
Gay Men's Health Crisis office?

- Who are you?

- I'm Bruce Niles. I'm the president.

I didn't sign any consent form  
for you to film me or this establishment.  
Please turn it off immediately.

**BRUCE:**

**MAN:**

**BRUCE:**

**MAN:**

Weeks.

- Oh, great, you're here.

- (KNOCKING AT DOOR)

- Anybody homo?

- Son of a bitch.

Hello, is this thing rolling?

Look at this!

We're in both of them the same week!

Every major network,  
and now finally, our very first office.

I want to introduce you to our gay president  
who's in the closet,  
and he's so handsome, don't you think?

Such a very handsome cover boy  
going to waste.

(GRUNTS)

Oh, great. Now you fight. Great! Fight, Bruce!

You make me sound like a coward  
and I'm not a coward.

You know what? You have nothing to lose.

Your brother invested for you  
so you have income.

You can be gay 24/7, Ned, but I can't. I can't.

So fuck you!

No, fuck you, Bruce.

- Man!



**- MAN:**

(SIGHS)

When I look at you, I am filled with despair.

When I look at you,

I worry we're not gonna win.

How do you think this country was founded?

I thought I was getting started  
with Paul Revere, not some coward.

(GRUNTING)

Ned, look at me! Look at me! Look at me!

We are doomed if we do it your way. Doomed!

How are they gonna help us

if they don't know who we are?

They won't help us, Ned, if they do.

(PANTING)

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

(MUTTERING)

**MAN:**

Come on! Come on!

**MAN:**

**MAN:**

(TELEPHONE CONTINUES RINGING)

(BREATHING HEAVILY)

Okay, I'll get it. Sure.

Hello? Yeah, you are our very first call.

How can I help you?

I'm sorry. You have the wrong number.

You two gotta

pull your shit together now, okay?

And you need to stop being  
such a fucking drama queen.

God damn.

This is Estelle.

Hey.

How's it going?

Welcome.

(MORE THAN THIS PLAYING)

Well, we have four hands and two incomes.

You're not getting any younger, you know.

All right. Let's leave my age out of this.

- Very beautiful in the country.

- Very quiet in the country.

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

- No, no. Don't you dare.

- I have to.

You didn't leave this number  
on your machine...

- You promised.

- Hello?

I do think we should picket the Mayor.

Yes, I said that and I stand by that. Thank you.

- You promised.

- (TELEPHONE RINGS)

No, no, no, no, no, no.

Wait.

(FELIX CLEARS THROAT)

"And every gay man who is unable  
to come forward and fight to save his own life  
"is truly helping to kill the rest of us."

How many of us have to die before  
you get scared off your ass and into action?

Thank you.

(SLAMS RECEIVER)

Who was that?

I hear it's being called  
the Ned Weeks School of Outrage.

I did speak to one of our science reporters.

- What'd he say?

- It turns out he's gay and he won't...

Don't yell at me.

All those shrinks,  
they must have done something right.

- Dr. Ritvo, Dr. Malev.

- Malev.

Dr. Gillespie.

Dr. Patti, Dr. Maxine, Dr. Laverne.

Why does it have to take so long?

All you ever eat is desserts.

Sugar is the most important thing in life.

All the rest is just to stay alive.

Mmm.

Argh!

(SCOFFS)

- Shit.

- What?

The fucking board! They say I'm causing a panic, that I'm making myself a celebrity. Not one of them will be interviewed or appear on TV, so I do it all by default.

And you're becoming a leader.

And you love to fight.

- I like to fight? Moi?

- Who, you? Yeah.

And you're having a great time.

I am.

It's funny, I never wanted to be a leader.

I'm not doing very well.

It's sad how much time we lost.

We just weren't ready then.

(SIGHS)

If I had it, would you leave me?

I don't know.

Would you if I did?

No.

How do you know?

Because my mother ran the local chapter of the Red Cross, and she put me to work in the blood mobile when I was eight.

I'm not programmed for anything else.

Ned, I have something to tell you.

You're finally pregnant?

(CHUCKLES)

I was married once.

You never told me that.

Yeah, I...

She said I had been unfair to her, which I had been.

I have a son.

You have a son?

She won't let me see him.

You can't see your own son?

But didn't you fight?

That means you're ashamed, so he will be, too.

This is why I didn't tell you.

Who says I didn't fight, Ned?

Well, what happens to people who can't be as strong as you want them to be?

Weakness scares the shit out of me.  
My father was weak  
and I'm afraid I'll be like him.  
His life didn't stand for anything  
and then it was over!  
So I fight constantly, and if I can do it,  
I can't understand why everybody else  
can't do it too, okay?  
Where are you going?  
Felix, where are you going?  
(DOOR SLAMS)  
(BANGS ON TABLE)  
(SIGHS)  
Felix, I didn't mean anything by that, Felix.  
I'm scared of lots of things, really.  
Heights. I never told you I'm terrified of...  
What?  
It's... it keeps getting bigger and bigger.  
It doesn't go away.  
(THUDDING)

**BROOKNER:**

Who, may I ask, is Felix?  
I've never been so in love in my life.  
I've never been in love in my life.  
Tell him to come see me  
first thing tomorrow, 7:30.  
Ned, God damn it.  
What am I supposed to do,  
not be with anybody ever?  
It's not as easy as you might think.  
- Oh, Emma, I'm sorry.  
- Don't be.  
How'd you get it?  
I was five years old.  
A woman from the Bahamas came to our town  
carrying the polio virus.  
She stayed with friends.  
Their kid was in my kindergarten class.  
Four of us in that class got polio.  
I was all dressed up in my Halloween  
costume to go trick or treating,  
and my mother felt my forehead,  
put me to bed.

In the middle of the night,  
I realized my whole body  
except my arms and my hands were paralyzed.  
I was crying out for my mother,  
"I can't move. I can't move."  
They rushed me to the hospital,  
were told I'd be dead in 24 hours.  
I fought. I lived.  
Were you in an iron lung?  
- I was.  
- (EXHALES SHARPLY)  
Then I was in bed at home.  
I was connected to my class with this little,  
little loud speaker.  
All the children were required to visit me.  
We would say, "Hello,"  
and then not know what to say next.  
They were all terrified of me. Still are.  
I scare the shit out of people.  
The holy terror in a wheelchair.  
I'm scaring people, too.  
Learn how to use it.  
Don't need everybody's love and approval.  
Ned, your organization is worthless.  
I can't get anyone important on the board.  
I've seen over 300 patients, me, one doctor.  
All these guys who made millions off of us,  
fashion, rock, movies, real estate, forget it.  
And anytime Bruce doesn't agree with me,  
he puts it to a board vote.  
And you lose.  
I can't pass along sex recommendations  
or any information that isn't 100% certain.  
Nothing is 100% certain in science.  
It wouldn't matter what you say anyway.  
Don't yell at me for what I'm not doing.  
What the fuck is your side doing?  
- I don't know!  
- Well, where's your AMA?  
Does being Jewish always make you hungry?  
I don't know. I'm not Jewish.  
I'm German.  
- Everybody thinks you're Jewish.  
- I know.

In medicine, it helps.  
You stayed in bed  
the whole way through school?  
By college I had my first braces  
and I could walk a little.  
I don't walk so good anymore,  
probably because I'm too busy to practice.  
You must practice. Right now. I mean it.  
Right now. Come on.  
- Don't scratch my Mathis.  
- (CHUCKLES)  
(CHANCES ARE PLAYING)  
May I have this dance?  
(CHUCKLES)  
Okay. You asked for it.  
Give me crutches.  
Mmm. Thank you.  
Mmm-mmm. I got it.  
Oh! Okay. Okay.  
Mmm-mmm. (CHUCKLES)  
I'm afraid to leave him alone now.  
I'm afraid a cure won't come in time.  
I'm afraid of my anger.  
I'm a terrible leader and...  
A lousy dancer. Put me back.  
(CLATTERING)  
(I-HUFFS)  
Polio was a virus, too.  
Nobody gets polio anymore.  
(ELECTRICITY CRACKLING)  
Where is he? I mean, we've been here  
for an hour and a half.  
Who are these people?  
We're in a fucking dungeon here!  
He can't do this to us.  
He cannot do this to us and get away with it.  
(DOOR OPENS)  
- Did you start? No? Thank God. Hi.  
- Hi.  
Jesus Christ, what a tomb.  
What, do they not want us  
to be seen above ground?  
Where is he? I'm an hour late.

- **NED:**

- Yeah, don't start on me, lamb chop.

- Tommy, where were you?

- I was up at Bellevue.

I had to put a sweet, dying child together  
with his momma.

(SIGHS) They hadn't seen each other  
for 15 years.

He never told her he was gay.

He didn't want to see her.

He refused to see her for weeks.

Oh, he was angry when I waltzed in with her.

That was a real weeper,

momma holding her son. He's dead now.

(DOOR OPENS)

(SIGHING) I'm truly sorry I'm late.

I'm Hiram Keebler.

- Hello.

- Hi.

Are you related to the folks who make  
the crackers? I'm kidding.

- I'm Tommy Boatwright.

- Ned Weeks.

Bruce Niles. I'm the president.

The Mayor wants you to know how much  
he cares and how impressed he is  
with how you've been shouldering  
your own responsibilities.

- Thank you.

- **NED:**

Everything we're doing is the stuff you  
guys should be doing, and we need help.

What Mr. Weeks is trying to say,

sir, is that we're swamped,

and we're fielding over 500 calls a day

on our emergency hotline,

and we're providing information that quite

frankly the city should be providing and isn't.

Sir, we need office space.

We have one small room.

We have over 100 people calling or walking in

and out every day,

and plus, it's real hard when

people don't want to rent to us because...

- Oh, that's illegal discrimination.

- Yeah, we know that to be true, sir.

Mr. Keebler, it is not illegal  
to discriminate against homosexuals.

We've been waiting for 14 months  
to see the Mayor.

It's taken us a year  
to get this meeting with you.

You're an hour and a half late.

Have you told the Mayor  
there's an epidemic going on?

- Says who?

- The government.

Which government? What, our government?

An epidemic?

- The Centers for Disease Control declared...

- Seventeen months ago.

You can't not know this!

Will you please reduce your level of hysteria?

Certainly.

New York City, San Francisco,  
Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, Denver,  
every single major American city is now  
showing cases.

At least 25 foreign countries,  
but New York City, our home,  
the city that you have pledged to protect  
has more than half of everything.

Half the cases, half the dead.

I know 57 of the dead ones.

I don't want to know any more.

Now, when do we get to see the Mayor?

Fourteen months is a long time  
to be out to lunch.

- You wait a minute.

- No, you wait a minute. We can't.

Time is not on our side. Now if you won't  
take word to the man, what are we gonna do?

Hire a hunky hustler  
and send him up to Gracie Mansion  
with a plea tattooed to his cock?

Mayor Koch is not gay!

- Oh, come on, Blanche!



- (ALL MURMURING)

(CHUCKLES)

Listen, don't you think I want to help you?

I have a friend who is dying of this shit  
right now in the VA hospital.

But it's very tricky.

You can see that. It is very tricky.

Tricky, shit. There are a million gay people in  
New York, a million and one counting you!

You know what? A fire goes out  
in a school furnace on the West Side,  
I get 3,000 calls in one day.

You know what I mean?

If so many of you are so upset,  
why am I only hearing from this loud mouth?

That's a very good question.

Okay, so there are half a million  
gay men in our area.

315 cases doesn't seem too high considering  
how many of us, of you, there are.

- This is bullshit!

- Ned, please.

Look, I understand this is tricky,  
sir, but we need your help.

I think, that is, the Mayor thinks,  
you guys are overreacting.

You tell that cocksucker  
he is a selfish, heartless son of a bitch.

You are Michael R. Marcus.

You hold an unsecure job  
with the city's Department of Health.

I'd watch out for your friends if I were you.

(CHUCKLES)

I don't believe that just happened.

Mickey, I am going on The Today Show  
tomorrow and I am telling them  
that the Mayor just threatened your job  
to shut us up!

The Today Show? You're gonna what?

They are treating us like shit  
and we're allowing them!

No politicians... The only thing  
they really respond to is pressure!

You heard him with his 3,000 West Side calls!

We're not yelling loud enough!

- (DOOR CLOSSES)

- Get your stuff. Get your stuff.

(DOOR OPENS AND CLOSSES)

(TYPEWRITER CLACKING)

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

- This is Tommy. Hey.

- Tommy, it's Ned. Nick died.

Shit. God damn.

I'll call later when I know more  
about the memorial.

**TOMMY:**

It's something I do now when a friend dies.

I save his Rolodex card.

What am I supposed to do?

Throw it away in the trashcan? I won't do that.

No, I won't. It's too final.

Last year, I had five cards.

Now I have 50.

A collection of cardboard tombstones

bound together with a rubber band.

I hate these fucking funerals. I really do.

And you know what else I hate?

I hate the memorials.

That's our social life now,

going to these things.

Nick was a choreographer.

I don't know if any of you knew that.

He was just starting out.

He didn't tell a lot of people.

(SNIFFLING)

He was waiting to invite you

to his big debut at Carnegie Hall

or some shit so we could all be proud of him.

But he was so good.

He had such promise.

We're losing an entire generation.

Young men at the beginning, just gone.

Choreographers, playwrights,

dancers, actors,

all those plays that won't get written now,

all those dances never to be danced.

In closing, I'm just gonna say I'm mad.

I'm fucking mad.  
I keep screaming inside,  
"Why are they letting us die?  
(SOBBING) "Why is no one helping us?"  
And here's the truth. Here's the answer.  
They just don't like us.  
(FAINT SOBBING)  
- (WIND WHOOSHING)  
- (BELLS JANGLING)  
(MUSIC PLAYS FAINTLY)  
(HIP HOP MUSIC PLAYING)

**FELIX:**

I've always been lucky.  
Good. That's the right attitude.  
I wanted a job on The Times, I got it.  
(CHUCKLES LIGHTLY)  
I wanted Ned.  
Have I given it to Ned?  
I don't know.  
One person has a cold, sometimes  
the partner catches it, sometimes not.  
Some doctors are saying  
it's okay if we use condoms.  
I know they are.  
- Can we kiss?  
- Felix,  
you have nothing to fight back with.  
You have no immune system to speak of.  
Your body is now open to  
every conceivable type of infection.  
You must be careful.  
I'm going to do my damndest. So must you.  
- I bet you say that to all the boys.  
- As a matter of fact,  
I do.  
(SIGHS)  
(FELIX GROANING)

**FELIX:**

Oh. (BREATHING HEAVILY)

**NED:**

who always wanted to love another little boy.

One day, he finally found that love,  
and it was wonderful.

I'm supposed to use gloves. I'm supposed to  
do this. I'm supposed to do that.

I'm supposed to not kiss him.

**FELIX:**

**NED:**

and taking care of a 35-year-old young man  
who's 100 years old and dying.

(FELIX GROANING)

Emma calls it a seesaw.

He's fine. He gets sick. He gets better.

He gets sicker.

**FELIX:**

He's afraid I'll leave him.

I told him I wouldn't leave him,

that I never, for one second,

would think of leaving him.

But he doesn't believe me.

It's hard to believe in much these days.

But we must never stop believing

in each other.

I'm a mess. That's what I am.

You cry and you cry

until you think you can't cry anymore.

And then you cry some more.

(SOBBING)

Not only for yourself and Felix,

but for all the little boys

who finally found their other little boys

they've wanted all their lives

now that we're men.

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

- GMHC.

- (TELEPHONES RINGING)

Estelle speaking. How may I assist you?

Someone needs a will.

Where's Ned? I want to speak to him.

- He's in the back.

- Here, give him this number.

GMHC.

GMHC.

Tommy, I think I got us maybe  
four qualified social workers to volunteer.  
They're all lesbians.

- Thank God for the lesbians.

- (CHUCKLING)

Your anus? Oh, Planet Uranus.

Thank you for sharing.

Mickey, why aren't you in Rio?

I put the phones on service.

You guys should get some rest.

We don't want any burn-out.

- **TOMMY:**

- Good night, honey.

- Night. Good night, sweetie.

- Bye, baby.

- Good work today.

- All right.

(INDISTINCT CONVERSATION)

Phil got diagnosed today.

Mickey, why aren't you on vacation in Rio?

I was in Rio. Gregory and I were in Rio.

I get a call from Hiram's office  
saying I should be in his office  
right away first thing this morning.

From Rio? What kind of meeting?

I get to City Hall.

Hiram keeps me waiting forever,  
and finally the commissioner comes out  
and he says

that Hiram doesn't want to see me anymore.

I wanted to scream, "I haven't slept  
in two days, you dumb fuck!"

But I didn't. Instead, I said, "Please, sir,  
then why did he make me come  
"all the way back from Rio?"

And he says, "Oh, I'm afraid  
he didn't take me into his confidence,"  
and he walks off.

Ned's article attacking Hiram just came out.

I'm not gonna lose my job  
because Ned doesn't like himself.

What's that, Mick?

You keep trying to get us to say things  
that we don't want to say,  
and I don't think we can afford to make so  
many enemies before we have enough friends.  
Terry Spalding is calling all of his friends  
from under his oxygen tank to say goodbye.  
Tibby Maurer took an overdose.  
Hal Schechter has got stumps for feet.  
Frannie Santuzza has lost his mind.  
Will you stop it? Just stop!  
- Mickey, are you all right?  
- I don't think so.  
Why can't they find the virus?  
Baby, it takes time.  
I work all day for this city writing  
stuff on breast feeding versus formula  
and how to stay calm when you have herpes,  
and at night, I work on our newsletter  
and our health column for The Native,  
and I don't... I just...  
I can't take it anymore.  
I have written about every single theory.  
Repeated infection by a virus,  
new appearance by a dormant virus,  
single virus, new virus, old virus, multi-virus,  
partial virus, latent virus, mutant virus...

**TOMMY:**

No, we mustn't forget about fucking and  
sucking and kissing and blood  
and voodoo and drugs and paupers  
and needles and Africa, Haiti, Cuba,  
blacks, amoebas, pigs, fucking Uranus!  
What if it isn't any of them?  
I don't know.  
The Great Plague of London was caused  
by drinking water from a pump  
that just, nobody noticed it.  
Maybe it's predisposition or there's just  
the theory of the herd.  
Only so many of us are gonna get it  
and then the pool's used up.  
What's if it's monogamy?  
Bruce, you and I could actually be worse off

because of constant bombardment  
from a single source, our lovers.  
So maybe the guys who go to the baths,  
maybe they've built up the best immunity.  
I don't know. I don't know what to tell  
anybody anymore, and everybody asks me.  
Who's right? I don't know. Who's wrong?  
I feel so fucking inadequate.  
How can we tell people, "Stop"?  
It's just, I don't... it might be caused by...  
I don't know. I don't know.  
That's exactly how I feel.  
And maybe he's right. And that scares me.  
Neddy, you scare me.  
You really think the President,  
that he wants this to happen?  
You really think the CIA  
has unleashed germ warfare  
to kill off all the queers  
that Jerry Falwell doesn't want?  
- Mick, try to hold on.  
- To what?  
I used to love my country.  
The Native received an anonymous letter  
describing top secret  
Defense Department experiments  
at Fort Detrick, Maryland,  
that have produced a virus  
that can destroy the immune system.  
Its code name was "Firm Hand."  
They started testing it in 1978  
on a group of gays.  
I never used to believe shit like this.  
They're gonna persecute us.  
They're gonna cancel our health insurance.  
They're gonna put us into camps.  
They're gonna quarantine us.  
And you think that I'm killing people?  
That is not what I said.  
It is! You know you said it.  
I've spent 15 years of my life fighting for  
our right to be free and to make love  
wherever, whenever, and you're telling me all  
those years of what being gay stood for

is wrong and that I'm a murderer!  
We have been so oppressed.  
Don't you remember?  
Can't you see how important it is for us  
to love openly without hiding, without guilt?  
(SOBBING) Why can't you see that?  
I went to the top of the Empire State Building.  
Okay, I'm taking you home.  
You can jump off from there  
when nobody's looking.

**TOMMY:**

Let's go home right now.  
I'm not a murderer. I'm not.  
All my life I've been hated for being gay,  
for being short, for being Jewish.  
So go ahead. You tell everybody.  
Tell everybody that we were wrong  
and I'm sorry.  
Someday, somebody's gonna come along  
and they're gonna stick the knife in you  
and tell you everything that  
you've fought for your whole life is shit!  
Mickey! Mickey! Get up! Get up. Get up.  
- It's okay.

**- TOMMY:**

I'm gonna take you home now, okay?  
I don't want to go home.  
Take me to St. Vincent's.  
Okay. That's fine. Come. Let's go.  
Look, we're all real tired, you hear me?  
We got ourselves here  
a lot of bereavement overload.  
We're the fighters. Aren't we? We're the...  
You bet, sweetness. And you're a hero.  
You hear me?  
You're a hero whether you know that or not.  
You're our first hero. Let's go.  
(DOOR CLOSES)  
- You want to be president?  
- I just want Felix to live.  
(TELEPHONE RINGING)  
Gay Men's Health Crisis.



Hiram, old buddy, how's it hanging?

- (SCRIBBLING)

- Mmm.

- Are you ready?

- Yeah.

The Mayor's found a secret little fund  
for giving away money secretly.

We are not allowed to tell anyone  
where we got it, and if we do,  
we'll never get any more.

- How much?

- \$9,000.

Ned.

Albert's dead.

His mother wanted to see him in Phoenix  
before he died,

and this was the last

week when it was obvious,

so I got permission from Emma

and took him to the airport.

And when we got to the airport,

- (INDISTINCT CONVERSATION)

- The pilot refused to fly the plane,

so I refused to get off of it.

You would have been very proud of me, Ned.

So finally we get another pilot,

and when we take off,

Albert just loses his mind.

- I don't want to be in this plane.

- It's okay.

I don't want to be in this...

I'm just gonna go.

- No. Albert.

- I don't want to be here.

- I don't want to...

- **MAN:**

(PASSENGERS MURMURING)

Sorry. Sorry.

Sir? Sir? You have to keep seated.

**MAN:**

- Sir, I repeat. You have...

- (SCREAMS) No!

(GRUNTING)

- Sir! Sir!

- Stop!

You have to sit down, okay?

**MAN:**

**BRUCE:**

- (BREATHING HEAVILY)

- It's me.

He doesn't know where we're going.

We're almost home.

That we're going to see his mother  
in Phoenix, nothing.

He just becomes...

(RETCHING)

Oh, shit. Can I get a goddamn towel, please?

When we land in Phoenix

and when we get to the hospital

where his mother had fixed up

the room real nice,

Albert's dead.

The hospital doctors refused to examine  
him and give him a cause of death  
on his death certificate.

Without the death certificate,  
the undertakers will not take him  
and neither would the police.

Come on, man. Pull it down.

Finally, some orderly comes  
and then stuffs my Albert  
in an oversized Glad garbage bag  
and puts him in the alley  
with the rest of the garbage.

I did you a favor, man. I got him out.

I want 50 bucks.

(WHINING)

(MOTHER WAILING)

(SCREAMING)

(SOBBING)

Is that all of him?

Yep. You want him? \$3,000.

He's gone. He's gone.

Oh, my God.

(GASPING) Oh, God.

**NED:**

and we are letting them.

- We're gonna die.

- (COUGHING)

We're gonna die very soon

unless you get off your fucking asses  
and fight back.

(COUGHING)

(DISTANT SIREN WAILING)

Emma's in there waiting.

Come on, two bites. Come on.

(SIGHS)

Don't make me break out the yogurt.

- One more.

- Have you talked to your brother yet?

**NED:**

I remember that about you.

You don't talk to the people

you love most in the world.

You want me to get better, and I'm not  
getting better and I feel so fucking guilty.

(PAPER RUSTLING)

You have a lunch meeting  
with Bill Blass on Friday. Fancy.

Mmm.

I'll call with my regrets.

What are you doing?

I'm making a date with you  
two months from now.

I've been invited to speak  
at Yale's Gay Week and we're going.

Remember how I told you they had  
those dances there now?

You're my date.

(SCRIBBLING)

(SOBBING)

I want you to live so much.

- Don't say it.

- I'm not supposed to say that.

(SIGHS)

Please, God, give us one more year.

I promise I'll eat my spinach.

(CHUCKLES)

(WHEELCHAIR MACHINE HUMMING)

I am taking care of more victims of  
this disease than anyone in the world.

We have more frozen blood samples,  
more data of every kind  
and much more experience.

(CLICKS)

**MAN:**

the government's position is this.

There are \$5 million  
in the pipeline for which we have received  
over \$55 million worth of requests.  
5 million doesn't seem quite right  
for some 2,000 cases?

The government spent 3 million  
investigating seven deaths from Tylenol.

We're entering the third year.

We voted to reject  
your application for funding.

Oh.

I'd like to hear your reasons.

The direction of the research you're  
suggesting is imprecise and unfocused.

Oh, it is, is it?

You don't know what's  
going on any more than I do.

Could you tell me precisely  
why you're blocking my efforts?

Dr. Brookner,  
there are now other investigators.

This is no longer only your disease,  
though you seem to think it is.

Oh, I do, do I?

And you're here to take it away from me,  
is that it?

Well, I'll let you in on a little secret, Doctor.

You can have it.

I didn't want it in the first place.

You think it's a privilege  
to watch young men die?

What am I arguing with you for?

You do not know enough  
to study boiled water.  
How dare you come down here and judge me?  
We only serve on this peer review  
panel at the behest of Dr. Murray.  
Another idiot, and, by the way,  
a closeted homosexual  
doing everything in his power  
to sweep this under the rug.  
And I vowed I'd never say anything  
like that in public.  
How does it always  
happen that all of the idiots  
are always on your team?  
How can you refuse to fund my research  
or not invite me to participate in yours?  
Your National Institutes of Health received  
my first request for money two years ago.  
It took you one year  
just to print up application forms.  
It's taken you three years from my first  
reported case just to show up here for a look,  
and the paltry amount of  
money you are forcing us to beg for  
out of the \$4 billion  
you now receive each and every year  
to protect the health of the American people  
won't come to anyone  
before only God knows when.  
A promising virus has been discovered  
in France.  
Why do you refuse to cooperate  
with the French?  
Why are we  
told not to cooperate with the French  
just so you can steal a Nobel Prize  
while something is being passed around  
that causes death?  
Women have been discovered  
to have it in Africa  
where it is clearly transmitted heterosexually.  
It is only a question of time.  
We could all be dead  
before you do anything. You want my data?

You want my ideas? You want my pages?  
Take 'em!  
(SCREAMS) Just do something with them!  
You're fucking right.  
I am imprecise and unfocused,  
and you are all idiots!  
(CLICKS)

**DICK:**

that picketing of the Mayor?

**NED:**

- And the signs?  
- Yes.  
And your next play is about a first lady  
who gave the best blowjobs in Hollywood?  
- Yes.  
- This place is perfect for a new office.  
Yes.  
Tidy.  
Here.  
- Oh.  
- I got him. I got it.  
Come on. Let's get you back to bed.  
Okay.  
There you go.  
Estelle made you some stuffed cabbage  
for later.

**FELIX:**

**NED:**

Kessler's lover's flying out to get it.  
Here it is.  
HPA-23.  
Ned...  
He looks awful.  
Do you think this is anything or  
is this just another shit drug like all the rest?  
I think you need to prepare yourself  
for letting go.  
You can't stop fighting for the ones you love.  
Haven't you ever had to  
fight for somebody you love?

(SIGHS)

Tommy, you gotta start  
putting yourself out there  
in a way that everyone else  
could see what I see.

- What kind of a fucked up love scene is this?

- (CHUCKLES)

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

Yes? Yes, ma'am.

**4:**

Yes, ma'am.

The fucking White House.

Fuck the Mayor.

I've just been invited to the White House!

They're gonna do something!

- (SCANNING)

**- N ED:**

what exactly does your title mean  
in terms of our plague?

Ah...

We prefer not to use negative terms.

It only scares people.

Well, there's 3,339 cases so far.

1,122 dead.

It sounds like a plague to me.

I'm scared. Aren't you?

What does your title mean again?

I come up with ideas for the President about  
what he ought to be doing and not doing.

Okay, good. Got it.

So, the money's there, right?

It just hasn't been spent.

So there's this new drug in France.

Why doesn't the NIH study it?

I mean, what I want, what we want,  
what we desperately need is for somebody  
to help us cut through all this red tape.

I can assure you that not a week goes by  
that I don't bring new information  
and reports to the President.

The progress that's been made  
on this disease is unprecedented.

But it's contagious.

Can't you see that because it's contagious,

(STAMMERS) you have to work faster?

Do you really believe that anybody  
in a serious public policy position  
in their heart of hearts, or even in their  
most closeted meeting says to each other,

"Hey, guys, let's not get  
too upset about this"?

Yes. Your boss hasn't said  
the word "AIDS" out loud.

Answer me this one question. Um...

This shit, can hookers get it or, you know,  
someone who had a one-night stand?

- Of course!

- You can't prove that.

I mean, from what I understand,  
from what I've read,  
female-to-male transmission through  
normal vaginal intercourse  
does not seem to be very efficient.

That simply isn't true. It's a virus.

It doesn't discriminate.

Yes, but it's very difficult, isn't it?

It's almost impossible for a straight,  
you know, regular  
heterosexual guy to get it. Am I right?

- I'm sorry?

- There's no documented cases, am I right?

I mean, there's not a single  
documented case of a heterosexual man  
getting it, not from fucking or a blowjob.

I don't have that information.

Great. That's what I thought.

Susan, call my meeting.

I'll be about 15 minutes late. Thanks.

Thank you so much.

- Call me any time.

- Wait. Please, sir. Wait...

(TELEPHONE RINGING)

(YELLING) One hundred million predicted and  
nobody is paying any attention!

(TELEPHONE RINGING)



**WOMAN:**

(DOOR CREAKS)

Why are you sitting on the floor?

I fell down trying to get from there to here.

Oh, don't touch me. God.

(SIGHS SHARPLY)

I hate it when you look at me.

You hungry? I'm hungry. How about you?

I looked in all my date books.

No one else I slept with is sick.

Maybe you're the carrier.

We don't have to do this to each other.

You're gonna get better, Felix. You are.

- Emma says the NIH...

- Emma, oh, God.

...is finally starting research.

We have to hope.

- Oh, do we?

- Yes, we do.

Do we?

And how am I supposed to do that? Huh?

Stop eating that shit!

No!

You know how important it is  
to watch your nutrition!

I have a life expectancy of 10 more minutes.

I'll eat what I want to eat.

(GROANS)

Ned...

It's getting messier, okay?

I don't want to make you see it.

Nobody can make me do anything.

You should know that better than anybody.

Now are you gonna sit there  
on the floor for the rest of your life?

- Do you hear me?

- Do you hear me?

No!

- No?

I've had over 40 treatments. No?

I've had three, no, four different  
kinds of chemo. No!

I've had three different experimentals.

Emma has spent more time on me

than anyone else, and it hasn't done a thing!  
You cannot force the goddamn sun  
to come out!  
I am so sick of fighting and everybody's  
stupidity and blindness and guilt trips.  
You know, if you can't  
eat the food, don't eat the food.  
I don't care. Take your poison. I don't care!  
Fish is good for you!  
Don't want any of that, do we?  
No green salad!  
No broccoli! No vegetables!  
No bread with seven grain!  
Why would anyone ever want any milk?  
- You might get some calcium in your bones!  
- (YELPS)  
- (CRASHES)  
- Do you want to die, Felix? Die!  
(CLATTERS)  
(SOBS)  
- (WHIMPERS) Please don't leave me, Felix.  
- I'm sorry.

**CROWD:**

Keep out! Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out!  
Keep out! Keep out! Keep out!  
(CHANTING CONTINUES)  
(GRUNTS)  
Assholes.  
- Gay Men's Health Crisis.

**- NED:**

and they're gonna be there?  
Thrush is a fungus, yes.  
Can you tell him that we'll be picketing there?  
And not afraid of arrest or police brutality.  
That's right.  
The Mayor has four more hours before  
we carry out our threats of civil disobedience

if he doesn't meet with us.

Tommy got the call yesterday, Ned.

Why didn't you tell me?

You see, it works!

- When? When?

- Only two can go to the meeting, Ned.

When?

- Tommy's executive director.

- I'm going.

- I polled the fucking board, Ned.

- I wrote that letter to the Mayor.

That meeting is mine. I am going to

go and represent this organization

that I've spent every minute

of my life fighting for

and that was started in my living room,

or I quit.

You'd let me quit?

(CLEARS THROAT)

The board asked me to read this

out loud to you.

- Read what?

- A letter.

(CLEARS THROAT)

Go on. Read it.

"We are circulating this letter widely among  
people of judgment and good sense.

"You are on a colossal ego trip  
we must curtail.

"To manipulate fear, as you have done  
repeatedly, is to us sheer barbarism.

"To exploit the deaths of gay men,  
as you have done on television

"and in publications all over America,  
is to us an act of vandalism.

"And after years of liberation,  
you helped make sex dirty again for us,  
"terrible and forbidden.

"We are more angry  
at you than ever in our lives toward anyone.

"We think you want to lead us all.

"Well, we do not want you to lead us.

"In accordance with our bylaws as drawn  
out by Weeks, Frankel, Levinstein,

"Mr. Ned Weeks is hereby removed as  
a director of Gay Men's Health Crisis.

"We beg that you leave us quietly  
"and not destroy us  
and what good work we manage  
"despite your disapproval,  
effective immediately."

(DOOR BANGS)

(DOOR CLOSES)

Ned, the executive director isn't on the board.

You know that. I don't have a vote.

(STAMMERS) And what could I have done?

- You didn't support me.

- That's not true.

You're all nothing but undertakers.

This whole organization is a funeral parlor.

- Ned.

- All you do is take care of the dying.

Who's fighting so the living can go on living?

Who's fighting for my Felix?

Tommy, we need you upstairs.

I belong to a culture that includes Marcel  
Proust, Walt Whitman, Tennessee Williams,  
Alexander the Great, so many  
popes and cardinals you wouldn't believe.

Mr. Green Beret, did you know  
that it was an openly gay Englishman  
who was responsible for winning  
World War 11?

His name's Alan Turing  
and he cracked the German's Enigma code.  
After the war was over, he committed  
suicide 'cause he was so hounded  
for being gay.

Why didn't they teach any of that in schools?

A gay man is responsible  
for winning World War 11!

If they did, maybe he wouldn't have  
killed himself and you wouldn't be so  
terrified of who you are.

That's how I want to be remembered,  
as one of the men who won the war.

Bruce, I know that I'm an asshole.

But please don't shut me out.

Go.

Your brother and I are lovers.

I'm dying and I need to make a will.

- Please.

- Thank you.

I want to leave everything to Ned.

How's my brother?

Well, he blames himself for everything,  
from my dying to the state of the entire world.

All that plus you two still not talking.

You must be as stubborn as he is.

I'll call him right away.

Do. He's at home packing.

We're going to Yale in a few days

(CHUCKLES) for Gay Week.

He says he can't believe it.

He tried to kill himself there  
when he was a freshman.

I haven't much, uh,  
except for a beautiful piece of land  
on the Cape in Wellfleet.

Ned doesn't know about it.

It was to have been a surprise  
for when we'd live there together  
or riding away happily ever after.

I also have an insurance policy  
with The Times.

I'm a reporter for The New York Times.

It's meant to come to my next of kin.

I'm afraid they might not give it to him.

Well, if he's listed as a beneficiary, they must.

You're smarter than that. Don't be so naive.

I assure you, I will fight to  
make sure that they do.

I was hoping you'd say that.

(COUGHING)

Felix,

I wish we'd met sooner.

(ELEVATOR DINGS)

(SOBBING)

(FAINTLY) I should be  
wearing something white.

You are, honey.

It should... It should be something

Perry Ellis ran up for me  
personally.

(CHUCKLES)

Ned...

You find a way to fight again.

**NED:**

(SOBS)

Hey, hey, hey-Hey-

(WHIMPERS)

Emma, Emma,

could we...

Could we start now, please?

(CLEARS THROAT)

We are gathered here in the sight  
of God to join together these two men.

They love each other  
very much and want to be married  
in the presence of their family and friends.

I see no objection. Do you, Felix Turner,  
take Ned Weeks...

Alexander. Yeah.

To be your...

My great true love.

- I do.

- Yeah?

I do. I do.

I do. I do. I do. I do.

(TELEPHONE RINGS)

This is Tommy.

Thanks for letting me know.

(THE ONLY LIVING BOY

IN NEW YORK PLAYING)

(INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PLAYING)