

Conservative

by

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INT. DINER AFTERNOON

TOM PARKER SITS ACROSS FROM HIS SON ADEN AT A BOOTH. HE TAKES A SIP OF HIS COFFEE AND EYES OVER HIS BOY.

TOM
So you're trying to tell the old man that you're gay. Right?

ADEN
Yeah.

TOM
Christ.

Tom rubs his chin.

ADEN
Am I out of the family?

TOM
What do you mean?

ADEN
You had always told me that if I ever brought home a man, I'd be disowned.

TOM
You're my son. And I love you. Even if you are defective.

ADEN
You can't help how you're born.

TOM
You weren't born this way. You chose to be this way.

ADEN
Come on, dad. Get out of the dark ages.

TOM
I can't really blame you. All this gay pride bullshit in the media nowadays is enough to twist anyone's mind around.

ADEN
No one twisted my mind around. I knew I was gay since I was fifteen.

TOM
Should have figured you were queer
when you had no interest in
sports.

ADEN
So there are no gay sports stars?

TOM
Sure, but we ain't talking about
the WNBA or guy's soccer.

Aden shakes his head.

ADEN
It's time you stop living in the
stone ages and dive headfirst into
the twenty first century.

TOM
I'm not in the mood for a lecture.
I'm in grieving.

Aden wears a mask of confusion.

ADEN
What are you grieving over?

TOM
My son's a faggot. What else?

ADEN
Stop being so overly dramatic. I
don't suppose I can get you to
meet Chet.

TOM
Is that your boyfriend?

ADEN
Yes.

TOM
Has your mother met him?

ADEN
Uh huh.

TOM
Does she like him?

ADEN
Yeah, the three of us all went
wedding dress shopping together.

TOM
For Chet?

ADEN
No. For me.

TOM
Oh for God's sake. You're gonna
marry this guy?

ADEN
Of course. I love him. We're all
gonna meet at my place for dinner
next Tuesday night. I already told
mom and she is coming. Can we
count on you to be there?

TOM
I can't do it. I'm sorry. You know
my feelings on this. The answer is
no.

ADEN
It would really mean a lot to me
if you could support me in this.

Tom looks down at his coffee cup.

TOM
I sure could use a refill. Maybe
have the waitress pour some brandy
in it.

ADEN
Dad? Are you listening to me?

TOM
Where's that damn waitress?

Tom looks all around, growing more and more agitated.

ADEN
I can see this is useless.

Aden starts to leave, but Tom grabs his wrist.

TOM
Wait a second. I'll make a deal
with you.

ADEN
I'm listening.

TOM
What would you say to a father son
bonding weekend?

ADEN
Go on.

TOM
You agree to this weekend, and I
will have dinner with you and
Chet. Deal?

ADEN (SHRUGS)
Deal.

The men shake hands.

INT. BEDROOM NIGHT

Tom is doing some reading and Joanne is brushing her hair
and looking at herself in the dresser mirror.

JOANNE
Would you mind running your plan
by me one more time?

Tom puts down his book on the night stand and continues
conversing with his wife.

TOM
I plan on turning our son
straight.

JOANNE
You can't turn a gay person
straight. They're born that way.

TOM
You're such a liberal. You're
probably the reason our son is
gay.

JOANNE
I beg your pardon?

TOM
Yeah. you babied the boy and now
he thinks he likes men. But after
this trip, he'll be a man.

JOANNE
What are you planning on doing on
this father son bonding trip?

TOM
Man stuff.

JOANNE
What are you gonna do? Throw raw
meat on the floor and fight over
gets it?

TOM
I'm not a barbarian. We'll cook
the meat before we fight over it.

Joanne rolls her eyes.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'm gonna take our boy on a
weekend to turn him into a real
man. Shake that sissy out of him.

Joanne starts laughing.

JOANNE
You can't be serious.

TOM
I'm very serious.

EXT. STRIP CLUB EVENING

Tom and Aden are standing outside the strip club. Aden
peers up at the sign. It reads Cherry's.

ADEN
Cherry's?

TOM
It's a bar.

Aden shrugs. The two men enter. A woman is dancing topless
on the stage and several men are surrounding the stage
hooting and hollering and tossing money on the stage.
Aden's face turns red.

ADEN
I'm leaving.

Aden starts to walk out of the place but Tom grabs his
son's wrist.

TOM
Do you want me to meet Chet or
not? You promised you'd give this
father son weekend a chance.

Aden takes a long pause. He looks into his father eyes and looks back at the exit sign and back at his dad.

ADEN
Alright.

TOM
Terrific.

Tom drapes his arm around Aden's shoulder. Tom smiles as he gazes upon the stage.

TOM (CONT'D)
Wow. Look at those boobs. Hot stuff, huh?

Aden looks down at the floor.

TOM (CONT'D)
Hey, honey. How bout a dance for my boy here?

Aden turns to his father.

ADEN
Dad!

TOM
Don't mind him. He's just shy.

The stripper is named Candy. She walks offstage and escorts Aden to the VIP room.

Aden sits down in the chair and is visibly tense. Candy smiles as begins giving him a lap dance. He clutches the sides of the chair and shuts his eyes and keeps whispering to himself.

ADEN
Chet, Chet, Chet.

CANDY
What's wrong, honey? You don't seem to be having much fun.

ADEN
I'm not.

CANDY
Don't you like me?

ADEN
I'm gay.

CANDY
Haven't heard that one before.

ADEN
My dad brought me here as part of
this father son weekend, I guess
trying to turn me straight.

CANDY
You can't change from gay to
straight. That's silly.

ADEN
I know that. but my dad seems to
think you can. He's real old
fashion. He even has Ronald Reagan
bumper sticker on the back of his
car.

CANDY
Be patient with your dad. Sounds
like he means well.

ADEN
He does. I just wish I could talk
to him about things. Serious
things.

CANDY
I wish I could visit my dad.

ADEN
Why can't you visit your dad?

CANDY
Heaven doesn't have visiting
hours, sweetie.

Aden exits the VIP room. Tom has a smile on his face.

TOM
Well, what'd you think? You like
girls yet?

ADEN
Nope.

TOM
Damn. Well that's alright, son.
Tomorrow's activity will make a
man of you yet. Because tomorrow,
we're going hunting.

ADEN

How will killing animals help turn me into a man, as you say.

TOM

It'll get your primal instincts again. At one time, men hunted for food. But then the internet and MTV came along, the world went to Hell and now the media is brainwashing our kids into thinking they're gay.

ADEN

Makes sense.

EXT. WOODS EARLY MORNING

The men are dressed in hunting gear.

TOM

Isn't this great? A father and son bonding over a hunting trip. Reminds me of the ones I used to take with your grandfather when I was a kid.

ADEN

Why didn't you ever take me hunting?

TOM

I worked a lot when you were little.

ADEN

I always felt like I came in second place to your work.

TOM

Being a cop is busy work.

ADEN

I guess it is.

TOM

I thought about ya all the time. Ask my partner, Murphy. That son of a bitch wanted to punch me I'd talk about you so much.

ADEN

Whatever happened to him?

TOM
Chief took his badge.

ADEN
How come?

TOM
For punching me.

Aden and Tom share a chuckle.

ADEN
Why do you have such a problem
with me being gay?

TOM
I thought I had raised a son. Not
a daughter.

ADEN
Be serious.

Tom pauses for a moment. He scans his son's face and sees
the general concern there.

TOM
It has a lot to do with the way I
raised. I was raised in a
christian household. God hates the
gays. That's how I was raised.
It's an abomination.

ADEN
You don't even attend church
anymore. As a matter of fact, you
haven't attended church in the
last ten years.

TOM
I still believe what the bible
says.

ADEN
There are gay Christians.

TOM
Phony ones.

ADEN
What makes you think the bible is
the true word of God?

TOM
I'm gonna smack ya.

ADEN

Sorry.

TOM

Anyway, it goes beyond the whole bible thing. It's also about tradition.

ADEN

Tradition?

TOM

Yeah. I always wanted a grandson to pass on the family name.

ADEN

Why would it have to be a grandson? Why not a granddaughter?

TOM

I've already got a daughter.

Tom says elbowing his son in the ribs.

TOM (CONT'D)

I just figured I could have a grandson that would enjoy the stuff I did. Football, baseball. You know, guy stuff. You were always into writing poetry and cooking and sewing, always found it hard to relate to ya.

ADEN

You were ashamed of me?

TOM

No. I was never ashamed of you. I just know it isn't going to be easy. I mean, I'm sure you've heard of gay bashing?

ADEN

I can take care of myself. I'm not going to live my life in fear just because of some ignorant people.

TOM

I know. It's just, I'm your dad. Ever since I first held you in my arms when you were just born, I made a vow to always protect you.

ADEN
I can protect myself. And Chet
will protect me.

TOM
How can you two fight with limp
wrists?

Aden places his hands on his hips.

ADEN
Dad.

TOM
Sorry, I couldn't resist.

They see a doe in the distance. They get in position. Aden
is visibly shaken.

TOM (CONT'D)
Take it easy. Steady your gun.

Tom helps his son steady his gun.

TOM (CONT'D)
Aim down the sight.

He shows him how to look through the eye hole.

TOM (CONT'D)
Hold your breath. Count to three
and fire.

ADEN
One...two... three.

The gun is fired and the deer falls down.

TOM
Nice shot.

ADEN
I can't believe I killed a living
creature.

TOM
It's just a deer.

ADEN
Chet will be furious.

TOM
Oh yeah?

ADEN
Yes. He's a vegetarian.

TOM
Good.

Time passes. They skin and cook the deer and eat it.

TOM (CONT'D)
I don't just hunt for sports. I usually only hunt what I can eat or make coats out of. I figure if an animal has to die, it better be for a reason.

ADEN
It's like you're honoring the animal, like the Native Americans used to do.

TOM
Exactly. I have to admit that this has been a fun weekend.

ADEN
I agree.

TOM
I don't suppose you like girls now?

ADEN
Nope.

TOM
Worth a shot. So you're serious about this guy?

ADEN
We're engaged.

TOM
I was really hoping for grand children.

ADEN
Chet and I can still make you a grandfather.

TOM
You can't make babies with two bananas.

ADEN
We could always adopt.

TOM
What are you Rosie O
Donnell?

ADEN
I held up my end of the bargain,
now you got to come have dinner
with Chet and I.

TOM
I don't suppose you'd accept me as
being sick Tuesday?

ADEN
What'll you come down with?

TOM
Bubonic Plague.

INT. BEDROOM NIGHT

Joanne turns off the bathroom light and enters the bedroom. She gets into bed. Her husband is reading a book. He keeps glancing over at her, rolling his eyes and muttering to himself.

JOANNE
What?

TOM
You turned our son gay.

JOANNE
What?

TOM
You coddled the boy too much and
he thinks he likes men. How can
you live with yourself?

JOANNE
You can't become gay. You're just
born that way.

TOM
Spoken just like a liberal. It
wasn't my genes that made him gay.
You're probably a carrier.

JOANNE
Are we going to spend the next
several nights playing the blame
game?

TOM

Yes.

JOANNE

This isn't exactly the end of the world, you know.

TOM

Not for you. That's my only son.

JOANNE

He's my only son too.

TOM

Yeah, but you're a woman.

JOANNE

So what?

TOM

You don't understand. It's a guy thing. It makes me feel...

JOANNE

Feel what?

TOM

Like I'm less of a man or something. I don't know.

Joanne begins rubbing her husband's shoulders.

JOANNE

You know that isn't true. Don't you?

TOM

I just feel totally blind sighted by this.

JOANNE

Really? I knew when he was fifteen. Why do you think he never brought home any girls and only guy friends?

TOM

Just figured he was really shy. Why didn't either one of you tell me?

JOANNE

We were scared of how you'd react.
You're not exactly the most
tolerant person in the world.
Remember when you found out
Mexicans were working on our
drywall? You threatened to call
immigration on them if they messed
up?

TOM

They didn't screw up, did they?

JOANNE

Why does this bother you so much?

TOM

You know the way I was raised.

JOANNE

I was raised catholic.

TOM

Yeah, but you're lapsed.

JOANNE

You haven't been in a church in a
decade.

TOM

I still try to keep God's
commandments.

JOANNE

Did you ever think that God made
our son gay?

TOM

The media did that.

JOANNE

How do you figure that?

TOM

All this crap about gay rights and
how it's suddenly cool to be a
fanny bandit. It's enough to warp
any young impressionable mind.

JOANNE

Are you serious?

TOM

Do I look serious?

JOANNE

You're not going to embarrass yourself when we go have dinner with Chet and Aden, are you?

TOM

I'm not going.

JOANNE

You have to. You promised.

TOM

I know...

JOANNE

Aden will be crushed. You don't want to hurt our son's feelings.

TOM

He's broken my heart.

JOANNE

What is so bad about our son being gay?

TOM

I don't want to talk about this anymore. I'm getting a headache.

INT. SQUAD CAR DAY

Tom is driving and his partner Harry is sitting in the front seat. Harry notices Tom is upset.

HARRY

What's wrong?

TOM

I don't want to talk about it.

HARRY

Might make you feel better to talk about it.

TOM

Well... Found something really troubling out about my son.

HARRY

Really? What?

TOM

He's gay.

HARRY
And?

TOM
That's it.

Harry starts laughing.

HARRY
It's not exactly the end of the world.

TOM
You got a boy?

HARRY
Yep.

TOM
How old?

HARRY
Thirteen.

TOM
How would you feel if he were gay?

HARRY
Bite your tongue.

TOM
On top of that, the wife and I are suppose to have dinner with my son and his fiance on Tuesday.

HARRY
That sounds nice.

TOM
I'm thinking about not going.

HARRY
That ain't right. You can't do that.

TOM
Why not?

HARRY
Because I'm sure it would devastate your son.

TOM
Never in my wildest dreams did I
ever think I would be facing a
dilemma like this.

HARRY
It's 2016, a lot of people have
gay kids.

TOM
Yeah, but not me.

HARRY
What makes you so special?

TOM
I'm so manly.

HARRY
Aren't you the guy that screamed
like a girl when someone found a
garter snake in the toilet at the
station?

TOM
I don't like snakes.

HARRY
I thought you were being murdered.

TOM
Thought it was gonna bite my nuts
off.

HARRY
It was a garter snake!

TOM
Still scary.

The person on the dispatch talks.

DISPATCH
We got a code 506 in progress.

INT. LIVING ROOM NIGHT

Tom is watching a movie on television. It features a father
and a son that are arguing. Hank is the father and Dale is
the son.

DALE
If that's the way you feel, then
don't come back.

HANK

That's fine with me. As far as I'm
concerned, I have no son.

Hank storms off, allowing the screen door to make a loud
banging noise.

Tom lets out a slight sigh and dials his son's phone
number. He hears three rings before he hears his son's
voice on the other end of the telephone.

ADEN

Hello?

TOM

Hey. This is dad. Listen, I called
to ask what time you said dinner
was tomorrow night?

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