

[MUSIC PLAYING]

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[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Hi, this is Cindy Friedman and I'll be your host at the Country Folk Bluegrass Stage at the Houston International Festival in Tranquility Park on Sunday, April 28. This year's lineup is brimming with Texas talent. And at 5:30 or 6:00, get ready for Houston's own Shake Russell and Jack Saunders.

Celebrate the festival's 20th anniversary for two wonderful weekends of food, fun, and music. Saturday and Sunday, April 27 and 28th, and May 4th and 5th at the Country Folk Bluegrass Stage sponsored by KPFT 90.1 FM, The Houston Festival Foundation and Continental, the official airline. For more information, call the festival hotline at 850-1991.

[MUSIC - RAY CHARLES, "IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT"]

- In the heat of the night we have blues for you on 90.1 FM, KPFT Houston, Texas, 4:00 AM, Sundays.

- Girl, and they are coming up.

- And those blues broads will be here at 4:00, so stay with us. And remember, every Saturday night at midnight--

- Every Saturday night at midnight on *After Hours* we play music. *After Hours* every Saturday night at midnight, right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. And that cart could win you a bunch of prizes around Pride Week.

- Sure could.

- It's a secret, and we'll tell you all about that later. Anyway, what are we doing, girl?

- We need to get back to Rock Lobster.

- OK, here you go. Aaron Fricke taking his boyfriend. Can you imagine that? To the high school prom.

- You're listening to *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* exclusively on *After Hours* KPFT Houston, 90.1 FM.

[MUSIC - B-52'S, "ROCK LOBSTER"]

[CRICKETS CHIRPING]

- Dear Aaron, you asked me what I think about asking Peter to go to the prom. Last year, Peter's attempt to bring a guy to the prom was seen by most people, in fact, I think by all, as a grab at publicity. That was because no one knew Peter. He just showed up out of a clear blue sky and raised a ruckus.

Since you've been in Cumberland much longer, and have more close friends, people won't suspect you of such ill motive so easily. But this is what they will think. One, Peter made you do it. Two, you're crazy. And three, you believe in gay rights, in that order.

Now, I know you did it for reason number three, gay rights. But you should think about how other people are going to react. And I think you should make an effort to explain what you believe. I respect any decision you make, as long as you really think about it carefully. Love, Ann.

- You want to do what?

- I want to bring a male date to the senior prom.

- And what makes you think you can do that?

- Well, you see, sir, the rules say that any senior can take the date of his or her choice. Being a gay man, I think I'm entitled to take a male date.

- Absolutely not.

- Can I talk to the student council about it?

- No, you can't talk to the student council. Now, look, I know what you're trying to do, and I won't allow it.

- How come?

- I don't have to defend my decisions to you, Aaron. We went through all this last year. Or have you've forgotten what happened to your friend, Peter Grayson?

- I haven't forgotten, but there's a difference. Peter was only 17 then, but I just turned 18. I could take this case to court if I wanted to.

- You would go to court with this?

- Yes, if I had to.

- Well, my decision is final, Aaron. Nothing's going to change it.

- Yeah, well, we'll see about that.

[PHONE RINGING]

Hello?

- Is Aaron Fricke there?

- Speaking.

- Aaron, this is John Ward returning your call.

- Oh, Mr. Ward, hi. I got your name from the National Gay Task Force. They said you handle a lot of gay related cases?

- That's right.

- Well, I'm gay. And I'm going to need a lawyer soon. So let me tell you why I called.

- So they'll take the case? You're really going to go through with it?

- I really am.

- Aaron, that's fantastic.

- I just wish I could let the rest of the students know before it hits the front page. Ethel, I think I have an idea.

- Aaron, what are you thinking?

- There's Bea Duvalge. If I tell her, the whole school will know in about 30 seconds. They don't call her magic mouth for nothing. Hi, Bea, how's it going?

- What's it to you?

- Bea, what would you say if I told you I'm going to the prom with Peter Grayson as my date?

- Gross me out to the max.

- Ann, I think it worked.

- Think they'll let him do it?

- He's just trying to get publicity.

- You got to admit, he's got a lot of guts.

- Yeah, he's crazy.

- I'll that Peter made him do it.

- So he wants to bring a guy to the prom. So what?

- This will ruin our reputation.

- What reputation?

- Somebody says he's going to court.

- Yeah, I hear he's got a lawyer and everything.

- This place is turning into Gay Town USA.

- I don't care what anybody says, it's OK by me.

- You know what really gets me? Lynch didn't even ask us what we thought about it.

- Hey, Fricke better watch out. There's a lot of kids around here who are going to get pretty damn upset. at him.

- I'm going to bash your faggot skull!

- Ow!

- He's bleeding.

- You just stood there and watched. You could have helped me. I'm going to the nurse.
- After Aaron filed suit in this court, an event reported by the Rhode Island and Boston papers, a student punched and kicked him in the school hallway. The unprovoked surprise assault necessitated five stitches under Aaron's right eye. The assailant was suspended for nine days.

After this, Aaron was given a special parking space close to the school doors and has been provided with an escort, principal or assistant principal, between classes. No further incidents have occurred as of May 26th, the day that this hearing began.

- Aaron, would you please tell us why you want to go to your senior prom with another man?
- I feel I have the right to go, just like any other student. And I don't understand why I shouldn't be allowed to go with Peter.
- Do you consider going to the prom to be a political statement?
- Well, I think just by being there I'm making a statement for human rights. I see it as a stand against the prejudice that Mr. Lynch is demonstrating, and some of the kids are following.
- Has that prejudice made you uncomfortable in school?
- Yes, it has. But I've managed to go about my daily routine, and I can't see why I should be separated from the other kids when it comes to the prom.
- Have you ever been separated from the other kids at Cumberland High because you are gay?
- No. I asked to be transferred out of gym class because some kids were picking on me, but Mr. Lynch wouldn't allow it.
- Aaron, do you have any heterosexual friends at Cumberland High?
- Yes. One of them is sitting in the courtroom right now.
- And how do they feel about your decision to sue Mr. Lynch?
- They have faith in me to make my own decisions. They're supporting me.
- Are you involved with any in school activities?
- I'm in the drama club. I just received a thespian award for outstanding performance in the Thurber Carnival.
- Have you met all the requirements for graduation?
- Yes. I even passed PE this year.
- School policy is that if a student meets all the requirements for graduation he may purchase prom tickets, is that right?
- Yes. Plus, I sold my 10 senior raffle tickets already.
- Thank you, Aaron. I have no further questions, Your Honor. Your witness.
- Mr. Fricke, can you tell the court what is the meaning of the word gay?
- It's the physical and emotional love shared by two people of the same sex, which is something I ought to know about considering I've been gay since I was at least five years old.

- Are you sure you're not bisexual?

- I've never dated girls, if that's what you mean.

- How many dates have you had with men?

- Objection.

- Sustained. Counselor, Mr. Fricke's private life is not at issue here.

- Yes, Your Honor. Well, as a homosexual, do you really believe you'll enjoy yourself at a heterosexual prom?

- I've seen straights have fun in gay bars. I don't know why I shouldn't have fun at a straight prom.

- And you don't think your presence there will be disruptive?

- No, sir.

- Or that you and your escort might be physically harmed?

- No, sir.

- Are you planning to wear a corsage to the prom?

- Am I what?

- Objection. Counsel is attempting to intimidate the witness.

- I would like to present this newspaper photograph of Peter Grayson wearing a corsage at a gay prom held for him in Boston.

- Evidence Exhibit A.

- Would you put your head on Peter's shoulder if you slow dance together?

- Objection. Aaron cannot speculate on his future impulses.

- Overruled.

- I don't know. I just do what comes naturally.

- I see. Aaron, you're wearing a bandage over your right eye. Would you please remove it?

- Objection, Your Honor.

- Sustained. The bandage is enough proof of physical harm to Aaron.

- Precisely. Aaron has suffered physical harm because of his desire to attend the prom with a male date.

- Objection. Aaron suffered this physical harm because he's gay. If Aaron had been afforded proper protection at school, he wouldn't have this scar.

- Aaron, before your story hit the news had you told all the students at Cumberland High that you were gay?

- No.

- Then why would they harass you?
- I guess they needed a scapegoat. And I'm an easy target because in their opinion I'm obviously gay. They see me as some kind of threat. I'm hoping that if we go to the prom, they'll understand that I'm not. I mean, it will bother some of the kids to have us around, but that's because they've never seen a gay couple before. Having us there will probably widen their range of experience.
- Widen their range of experience.
- Well, I think if the other students see us at the Pleasant Valley Country Club they'll say wow, gay people really are human beings with constitutional rights.
- This prom is to be held at the Pleasant Valley Country Club?
- Yes, Your Honor.
- I play golf there frequently.
- Oh, really?
- Yes, it's quite relaxing.
- I can imagine that being a judge has its share of pressures.
- That may be a gigantic understatement.

[CHUCKLING]

Does the defense have any further questions?

- No, Your Honor.

- This court is recessed until 10:30 tomorrow morning. If anyone needs me, I can be found at the Pleasant Valley Country Club.

[CHUCKLING]

- Aaron?
- Dad? What are you doing here?
- Don't look so surprised. I just thought I'd drop by and give you some moral support. We haven't talked very much since this thing started.
- I know. Thanks for coming, dad.
- Well, it was the least I could do. Say, are you hungry?
- Yeah, I'd love to get something.
- Well, there's a place around the corner that's not too bad.
- That sounds good to me.
- You really handled those questions well.

- I feel like I've been working on the answers for a long time, like, about 18 years.
- I'm beginning to understand that now. Aaron, I don't know how to say this, but well, when I saw you on the stand today, I felt proud. I was proud that you had the courage to say the things you said. I only wish it hadn't taken me this long to find out how you really felt.
- Dad, you can't blame yourself for that. I didn't want you to know. I was afraid of what would happen if you did find out.
- Well, I'll say this much, I never thought I'd be sitting in a restaurant with a homosexual telling him I loved him.
- I love you too, dad.
- Mr. Lynch, could you summarize your reasons for denying Aaron's request?
- I'd be glad to. First of all, I was worried about Aaron's safety. Secondly, I was concerned about the negative effect this homosexual interaction would have on the prom.
- If this court ordered you to protect Aaron Fricke, wouldn't you provide that protection?
- If I was ordered by the court, yes, I would. But I couldn't guarantee their safety.
- Not even with adequate security?
- I don't know how much is adequate. I'd have to look into that.
- All right. Did Aaron tell you about the violence against him in gym class?
- Yes. He told me.
- And yet, in effect, you refused his request for a transfer?
- Well, I--
- Weren't you therefore subjecting Aaron to the possibility of more violence?
- No. No, not intentionally.
- Mr. Lynch, you mentioned a negative effect on the prom. Could you be more specific?
- Well, the presence of an openly homosexual couple might encourage the other students to misbehave. There could be excessive drinking, vandalism, and so on.
- There could be, but you don't know for sure.
- I'm not 100% certain, no. But I saw what happened last year at the junior prom when Peter Grayson tried to attend with his male date. The students couldn't handle the pressure. They became unmanageable. One student jumped into the lake with his tuxedo on.
- Wasn't that the older brother of the student who gave Aaron the welt under his eye?
- Yes. Yes, as a matter of fact, it was.
- Do you allow girls to dance together at the prom?

- Yes. We allow girls to dance together. But that does not represent homosexual interaction. Two boys dancing together does.

- Well, that's interesting. I'm curious, Mr. Lynch, whether you have any homosexual acquaintances?

- No, I do not.

- Do you know anything about the homosexual lifestyle?

- Enough to know that I disagree with it.

- Would you say you strongly disagree with it?

- Yes, I'd say so.

- Mr. Lynch, are there any homosexual teachers at Cumberland High?

- No, there are not.

- Oh? Aaron has received a letter from a substitute teacher at Cumberland High who's gay, and whose name naturally will be withheld. Mr. Lynch, I have here the Cumberland High school handbook. Would you, please, read the underlined passage for us?

- "Prejudice as a byproduct of ignorance is divisive and inimical to our nation's traditions."

- Do you agree with that statement?

- Yes, I do.

- Thank you, Mr. Lynch. I have no further questions, Your Honor.

- So we're really going through with this, huh?

- Why, what's wrong?

- I'm sick of it, that's what's wrong. There were reporters calling me every 10 minutes. Then some guy threatened to kill me in front of my building. I was kind of hoping they'd call the whole dance off.

- Peter, we're so close to winning. The prom is only a week away.

- I know. But I guess I never thought it would get this far.

- Maybe I never thought I would get this far either, but it has. I mean, every gay person in the country is watching what's happening here. I can't stop now. Listen, if you don't want to go, that's OK. I'll find somebody else to go with.

- No, I don't want to disappoint you. There's just one thing.

- What's that?

- Do you think you could find two lavender tuxedos?

- I'll see what I can do. Let's wait for the judge's decision. Who knows, we may end up having a prom all by ourselves.

- After considerable thought and research, I have concluded that even a legitimate interest in school discipline does not outweigh a student's right to peacefully express his views in an appropriate time, place, and manner. To rule otherwise would completely subvert free speech in the schools by granting other students a heckler's veto, allowing them to decide through prohibited and violent methods what speech will be heard. The First Amendment does not tolerate mob rule by unruly schoolchildren. In conclusion, I find that the plaintiff has established a probability of success on the merits, and accordingly, his request for a preliminary injunction has been granted.

- Does that mean what I think it means?

- It means that we've just won your case.

- We won? We won!

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- Excuse me, I'm a reporter for the *Herald American*. I'm asking students what they think about this whole thing.

- What whole thing?

- You know, the senior prom tonight.

- Oh, they make me sick. Homosexuals don't even belong on this Earth, much less at our prom.

- Really? Then you're against what's happening?

- Against it? I'm ashamed to be a Cumberland student anymore. If homosexuals were water bugs, I'd stomp on them.

[CHUCKLING]

- You're not Aaron Fricke by any chance?

- How did you ever guess?

- Hey, Aaron, that was all right.

- Good going, Aaron.

[DOORBELL]

- Peter, I was getting worried.

- Train was late. Aaron, you look fantastic.

- Well, I should. After all, it's the night of my prom. Come on upstairs. I've got a tuxedo.

- Did you get the lavender ones?

- Did you really think I was tacky enough to wear a lavender tuxedo?

- Well, I am.

[LAUGHING]

- I got blue. This lovely dark navy one's yours, and an equally lovely powder blue mine. Cumberland High school colors, blue and white. I thought it would be patriotic of us. Peter, you really look good. I'm glad you're here.

- Well, I'm glad I'm here, too. And I think we're going to make a stunning couple. What's that?

- Those are TV lights.

- Look at all those people.

- Are you nervous?

- Yeah, a little.

- So am I. But we made it this far. It ought to be easy from here.

[SHOUTING]

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- Are you going to stay at the prom all night?

- What do you think of the Gay Rights Bill?

- Are you and Peter Grayson lovers?

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

- How do you feel about [INAUDIBLE] statement condemning homosexuality?

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Nobody's dancing. They're all looking at us.

- That's all right. They've never seen two men dancing together before. Let them get used to it.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Don't you want to dance? That's what we're here for.

- Not with them out there.

- Remember that guy you mentioned to me, Bob Cote?

- Mm-hmm.

- Is that him over there with Bea?

- Yeah, that's him.

- He's kind of cute. It looks like they're arguing.

- That's nothing new. They're always arguing.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- So what are we going to do? Just sit here all night?

- Leave me alone.

- I will. I'm going to dance.

[MUSIC - B-52'S, "ROCK LOBSTER"]

- Here comes your friend.

- Bob Cote? I can't believe it.

- What's to believe? Long time no see, right? Mind if I join in?

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Hey, Bob, you're pretty good.

- Yeah, you're pretty good yourself.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Dear, Peter, after the prom and everything I thought you'd like to hear how graduation went. You know how they always wait until the end to call the names of the graduating seniors? Well, when they finally called my name, people started booing from the bleachers. My stomach tightened up. I knew it would be bad, but I didn't think it would be that bad.

But then, I heard a fainter sound. The sound of applause. It was coming from the senior class. They were cheering me. Love, Aaron.

[GRADUATION MARCH PLAYING]

- Aaron Fricke's *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* starring Benjamin Kiser as Aaron, Andrew Soller as Peter, Richard Mcilvaine is Mr. Lynch, and Kenneth Pemsky is John. Featuring Nora Sinclair as Billy's mother and the English teacher, William Cabaniss as Judge Pettine, Virginia Mazur is Ann, Joseph Schramm is Bob Cote, Michelle Gabo as Bea Duvalge, Babo Zarek is Mr. Fricke, Aaron's father, David Erskin as the gym teacher and the driver, David Strasberger as Jeff, Peter Hajdu as John Ward, and Alan Zaremba as the defense attorney.

Also appearing were Jim Cook, Jane [? Yavi ?] John Pedergor, Virginia Beech, Alex Barker, Tom Bigalo, Charles Forsyth, Tom Tenney, Julie Simon, Elizabeth Stearns, Sarah Steele.

Written by Richard Segalcoe. Based on the book and original material by Aaron Fricke. Directed by Nicholas Deutsch, produced by Wesley Horner. Melanie Burzon recording engineer, David Lovalley production assistant and tape editor. John Bose, location coordinator, Francis Shrand, talent coordinator.

Special thanks to the Ideal Diner of Boston, the staff and students of the Cambridge School in Weston, especially William Sheldon and Robin Wood, and to Gary Buseck, attorney. The program was recorded entirely on location in New England, next to downtown recorder's, Boston. Tom Carr, engineer. *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* by Aaron Fricke was used by permission of the publisher, Allison Publications Inc.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- What did you say?
- We're supposed to give a cassette away.
- OK, what do you have to do if you want to win the cassette?
- Be the 10th caller.
- 526-5738, or 526-KPFT to win an unedited copy of *Reflections of a Rock Lobster* by Aaron Fricke.
- I guess we ought to tell Richard.
- Yeah, 526-4000, or 526-KPFT. Hope you enjoyed that kids as much as I enjoyed bringing it to you.

[GRADUATION MARCH PLAYING]

- Whoa. And look at that--
- For a cassette copy--
- Oops. Well, for a cassette copy, be the 10th caller.
- Yeah, look at those phone lines lighting up.
- We're actually trying to give away a cassette.
- We might have to give away two.
- Yeah, we'll do that. How about that?
- OK.
- Caller number 20.
- There you go.
- This time around, 526-4000, or 526-KPFT. Listen to this, Mary. It's Mike and the Mechanics and it's called *Word of Mouth*. That's brand new for Mike and the Mechanics.
- Sure is.
- Girl, did you like that?
- Yeah, where'd you find that?

- Oh, at the record store.

- Hmm.

- It's going to be OK, kids. Trust me.

- Speaking of that, we do a lot of new music here.

- Nude music?

- New, new, new.

- Oh, girl, you scared me.

- And it really surprises me. Every time I turn around, it's like I listen to a radio station, a different one than this, and just--

- Well, I do too. We all do.

- --couple of days ago I heard them announcing, "And now, here's the new one from Mariah Carey." Which is--

- Is that the one we've been playing?

- For six months.

- Hey, I want to say Gary and Greg and Derek and David, and all you, all these notes I have in my hand, I'm sorry we're not getting to your requests. But we've been listening to *Rock Lobster*, Aaron Fricke, and I hope you enjoyed that. Call us up and let us know what you thought about it. Did we get the winners yet?

- They're still out in the lobby.

- Go get 'em, Mary.

- Well, OK.

- Hang on, it's going to be OK. *After Hours* on 90.1 FM, KPFT Houston.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Waiting to hear from you at 526-4000 or 526-KPFT, baby.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

90.1 FM KPFT *After Hours* radio celebrating life from the heart of Montrose. And baby, it's all right, because we're here.

- And we're queer.

- Yeah.

- Somewhere in Des Moines or San Antonio, there's a young gay person who all of a sudden realizes that she or he is gay, knows that if the parents find out they'll be tossed out of the house. The classmates would taunt the child. And the Anita Bryants and John Briggs are doing their bit on TV.

And that child had several options. Staying in the closet, suicide, and then one day that child might open a paper that says homosexual elected in San Francisco. And there are two new options. The option is to go to California, [LAUGHTER] or stay in San Antonio, and fight.

Two days after I was elected, I got a phone call and the voice was quite young. It was from Altoona, Pennsylvania. And the person said thanks. And you've got to elect gay people so that young child and the thousands upon thousands like that child know that there's hope for a better world. There's hope for a better tomorrow.

Without hope, not only gays, but those Blacks, the Asians, the disabled, seniors, the us', without hope, the us' give up. I know that you cannot live on hope alone. But without it, life is not worth living. And you, and you, and you have got to give them hope. Thank you very much.

- That's Harvey Milk. And you've heard him many, many times on this show if you listen as much as I do. And he usually says this just before I have something to say to you. If you listen, you know that, too.

And all I got to say to you is that next week I'm going to be on vacation, darling, to get away from you. Because see, when you do this for free for almost four years, you just have to get the hell out of here every once in a while or you go crazy. I already went crazy once, and it's no trip. You have to come back.

But next week is going to be a marathon, and then the week after that. And Jimmy will be here begging and pleading, and I don't want that to happen because you know how important this is to me. So I want you to be there for him and take care of him for me while I'm gone, OK. So get your nickels and dimes and dollars and whatever you can and call us next week and make a pledge, and keep us going.

And if you're as young as I was one time, I know that's hard to believe, and you listen and you can't pick up the phone yet and you can't take your best friend to the prom yet, don't worry, baby. It's going to get better. Because one of these days, you'll grow up and you can call us. So don't feel guilty about not being able to call.

David won a cassette and Dan won a cassette. And I want to say thanks for listening. And I want to play a song now for me and for Philip and for Jimmy, and I guess everybody else that's ever been in this situation. Because this week I'm going to get on a plane, and one thing we have not lost is our emotions.

So this is just for us. Plus, I'm going to listen to this show in Florida. It will make me feel better when I feel blue about missing you. I'll see you next week.

Until then, just remember what Harvey Milk said, babies. Rights are not won on paper. They are won by those only who make their voices heard, OK. So speak out, even if it's sending a check or making a phone call or calling the switchboard.

Whatever it is, stand up for yourself because ain't nobody else going to do it. OK, I'll see you next week. I love you. OK, Louise.

- Oh, it's that music again.

- You got it. Goodbye, girl. I'll see you in two weeks. Are you going to be OK, baby?

- I'm going to be OK.

- With the marathon and everything? I know you will.

- I got a lot of good people around.

- You know I love you, and you're the only one I'd leave this puppy with. So just take care of it, and I'll see you in two weeks.
- I'm going to miss you.
- No, you won't. I'll be at Florida, with all those retired people.
- You need to have a couple of weeks off.
- And we need to do it before Pride week, because that's going to take a lot out of us. Hey, if you want to help us during that hateful parade-- I mean, that wonderful parade, give us a call at the station. And you keep pushing for that.
- You bet.
- Because we're going to be throwing beads and rubbers and jock shorts, and who knows what.
- Whatever we can get our hands on.
- That's it, girl. So have a great week, babies.
- I love you, baby.
- I'll see you in a couple of weeks. And Jimmy will be here next week pitching, so call him up and make a pledge.
- And happy birthday, baby.
- Bye. Oh, thank you.
- This is Jello Biafra. You're listening to KPFT Houston 90.1 on your FM dial, unless your stereo was made in America. Why?

[MUSIC PLAYING]