

DAVID: I was going to-- I was going to read it all. I can't remember. Ray's was short, so I read that one. But Judy's, I was going to get to since she wrote me too.

MAN 1: It's-- Yeah.

DAVID: I'm sorry, Judy, for not--

MAN 1: Oh, and I didn't-- I was going to-- I should have printed it out and brought-- and bring it, but I didn't know that-- I didn't know that you were going to be here. And--

DAVID: I mean, I wasn't--

MAN 1: What she was saying, basically, is that you're not going to like what I have to say because first of all, he's-- it takes him to make that step. He's got to do that. And until he does--

DAVID: I know. It's like, and a lot of-- so many people have said, "It's not your problem. Don't worry about it."

MAN 1: No. We're not saying that at all.

DAVID: I know. I know. But--

MAN 1: No.

DAVID: It's just some people are just like-- it's like they want me to forget and just walk away or something. And I mean--

MAN 1: You can't walk away from something like that.

DAVID: --last weekend, when I got back into Houston, just the thought of just forgetting and pretending like nothing happened. I mean, I started to cry because I was like, I cannot live with myself if I was just going to be the person that was just like, not my problem. Walk away. I don't care. Completely dismiss. And give up on someone.

MAN 1: Yes. Now, you can't own this problem.

DAVID: I know. Yeah.

MAN 1: This is his problem. But the one thing that you can do that is probably more important than anything else you can do is that you're there for him. He knows you-- he can call you.

DAVID: He can talk to you.

MAN 1: He knows if it really gets bad, he can come to you.

DAVID: Yeah. Yeah. And I know it, and he knows it, I worry more. I worry for the both of us. Well, he doesn't--

MAN 1: Yes.

DAVID: He's just like, it's what I've known. I don't really--

MAN 1: This is my life. Yeah.

DAVID: Yeah. And I'm like-- and it's stories like that that's just like, I have the \$10 million family.

MAN 1: Yeah.

DAVID: And--

MAN 1: Actually, I was just thinking about that. And it's just in this last generation that folks like you. Your parents know, you're accepted, and all of that. You don't have a problem. But from my generation, we never told. And if it was found out, we were out in the street. That's what happened to me.

DAVID: I'm-- I just--

MAN 1: And my parents never came back. I mean, they kicked me out at 17. And said, "You're gay. We can't stand it." And that was it.

DAVID: That's why I threw him down to the--

MAN 1: And most people were that way. And they found out that they had miserable lives in high school because they couldn't really be out. Maybe one friend or so. And as soon as high school was over, they either went to college or went out on their own, and had their own life, and was able to do-- and meet people like themselves, and have another life.

DAVID: It's like-- when I was thinking about it, it's just like, there's countless stories like this in Houston and everything. And--

MAN 1: Yes.

DAVID: I mean, he has money in the bank that-- I mean, he took out when-- this morning. I went with him and everything. He took out as much as he could, just in case his dad kick him out. And it's like, he has the money to last a few months, I think, in an apartment or whatever, but he can't-- he's not 18, so he can't buy one. He have to live with someone. But I was like, it doesn't matter what you do. I mean, that's what the gay community is for is when you need people, it's like--

MAN 1: They pull together.

DAVID: Yeah. It's like, I can get you a job in an hour. OK. Tell people what the problem is and they'll say, done.

MAN 1: Yes.

DAVID: Find a place, done.

MAN 1: Yes.

DAVID: There's people with more money than you can think of that have gone through this, and worked, and strived, and are determined to make sure that they never have to know someone that goes through it again.

MAN 1: Yes. Big Roy has something on that.

BIG ROY: Yeah. I wanted to weigh in on a comment that you had just made about people in our generation.

MAN 1: Yes.

BIG ROY: How it being so difficult being kicked out on the street. And there was an alternative, an even worse alternative to being kicked out on the street. And that's when the parents would send their kids to a psychiatric hospital to undergo electroshock therapy, and chemical therapy, and real torture.

MAN 1: Inside [INAUDIBLE].

BIG ROY: Real torture.

DAVID: Therapy. Yes. Yeah.

BIG ROY: I mean it was just something that comes right out of--

MAN 1: It was shock treatment. And yeah.

BIG ROY: It was like something that comes right out of the Nazi camps. I mean, absolutely unbelievable physical torture that they put these kids through. They-- under the auspices aversion therapy.

MAN 1: Yes, aversion therapy. Yeah.

BIG ROY: That was just pretty awful. Pretty awful. I mean, I was lucky I was kicked out on the street by my folks when I was--

MAN 1: Yes. But what happened to folks like us? Fortunately for me, I had had a year of typing in high school. So I got an office temp job.

BIG ROY: Me, I had no skills, whatsoever. Nobody's going to hire 16-year-old. So I became a whore. A street hustler out there in New York City.

MAN 1: And that's-- you can go to Pacific Street, you can go to Lower Westheimer, and--

MAN 2: See them all over.

MAN 1: Yes.

BIG ROY: And every big city has their section where the throwaways and the hustlers-- and most of the hustlers are throwaways.

MAN 1: Yeah. Yeah. And the longer they're out on the street, the less of a chance that they can be integrated.

BIG ROY: Well, that's very true. And--

MAN 2: It's a tough life.

MAN 1: Not that-- I'm not saying that that's going to happen to your friend because like you said, he works now, and he's--

BIG ROY: He has a skill and everything.

MAN 1: He has-- yeah. Evidently.

BIG ROY: And I didn't.

MAN 1: And he's striving to get his GED or whatever. So--

DAVID: I think it's just he-- he's pretty sure he can make it to 18. He's made it this far. I'm still like, it just takes one time for something to happen that you can't change.

MAN 1: That's the thing that you have to feel so helpless.

DAVID: It's like I kept seeing-- it's like the analogy. Did you read the analogy? It was like watching someone in your family getting the crap beat out of them, and you're just behind, like a soundproof glass, and all you can do is watch. You can bang and you can scream, but it's until they want your help, you can't do anything about it.

BIG ROY: David, David, I'd like to say, another thing that you can do with this guy is to let him, not only you're there for-- to support him, but let him know that he knows his situation better than you or anyone else. And that you will support any decision that he makes.

MAN 2: That's very troubling.

BIG ROY: And trust me.

DAVID: I know.

BIG ROY: Verbalizing that to him. It's one thing to say that you're there to support and comfort, and you're there in his corner, but it's an entirely different thing to articulate to him that he knows his self and his situation better than anyone else. And you are there to support whatever decision he makes.

DAVID: I know. I feel like-- it's like I don't want to become-- what's the word? It's like-- I don't want to be one of those people that is like, Oh, I want to rescue Caser, feel self righteous because you need to help someone and everything. It's like, I know his-- he does know his situation better. And I let him know all the time, it's like, you need anything, you help-- you call me. Because I'll find it. Because I figured, Jimmy, Ray, Judy, and Han that if I need-- if I need someone that knows the law or knows how to help people--

MAN 1: Well, you see-- and I was just thinking, I don't know that law. I know that it's-- in Texas, age 17 for men is legal for sex. Now, there must be some magic thing with 18 in that you are responsible to your parents until then or--

MAN 2: 18 is when you change over and you're legally an adult. OK.

DAVID: It's before that, you can get a judge to give you emancipation into an adulthood.

MAN 2: OK.

DAVID: But his mom is not going to let that happen. I mean, she drives a Lexus. She can fight that until he's 18 anyway.

MAN 2: Yeah. And-- OK. So that's--

DAVID: Yeah. It's like she's not going to let go. I mean, she's going to-- I mean, he's pretty sure he's-- she's going to follow, find, do whatever. He's a target.

MAN 1: Well, he can disappear a couple of months before his 18th birthday, and go underground. And when he surfaces after he's 18, then--

MAN 2: Then she can't touch him.

MAN 1: --then she can't touch him. Yes. Yes.

DAVID: Yeah. It's just one of those--

MAN 1: But your fear is that between now and then, what's going to happen?

DAVID: Yeah, it's what you don't see. It's--

MAN 2: In between the phone calls.

DAVID: Yeah. It's like all those-- it's like someone having the perfect plan, and then something that you never think ever happens would happen.

MAN 2: Yeah.

DAVID: What if his grandfather finds out. Because his grandfather is the one that is the son of the Nazis. So it's like, what if he goes nuts? He already-- that grandfather had a psychotic phase, and took out a police station with a shotgun. And then went out on a boat for a few months just by himself. I mean, the family-- the whole family. The whole family is--

MAN 1: Wow.

DAVID: Yeah. The whole family is just unstable.

MAN 1: To say the least.

MAN 2: Now the three of you have been with Hatch for a while. And there's been a lot of folks come and go through Hatch. Has anyone there had anything similar to this?

MAN 3: Oh, you hear a lot of--

MAN 1: A lot of--

MAN 3: You hear a lot of stories. And some of them are just really horrible. And this is-- each one, I mean, my grandmother who raised me, she just can't understand why a parent would do this to a child. She's-- it's just shocking whenever you hear it. Just-- no matter what the level. I mean, how could a parent treat their children like this?

MAN 1: Or throw them away.

MAN 3: Or throw them away. Exactly.

MAN 1: Yeah. And what do these folks do? I mean, when they're having problems with their parents or the parents are giving them grief or--

MAN 2: Different ones deal with it in different ways.

MAN 3: Yeah.

MAN 2: Sadly enough, a lot of them that do come through there end up being the little hustler boys. And we've seen a couple of them come through there like that.

MAN 3: Well, I've never seen that case. But there are a few who really aren't-- they're really lost. They don't know how to do it.

DAVID: It's just like even outside of Hatch. I mean, HATCH seems to-- I mean--

MAN 1: I look at Hatch, and I think this is the gay community of tomorrow. These are the privileged kids who have accepting families, or if not, then they have each other.

DAVID: It's just like-- and I think what about all these guys that dress better than all of us and have the cool car and everything? And it's just like, there was someone who's twice their age. And it's few years from now.

MAN 3: Yeah. OK. What's--

DAVID: Mom and dad kicked me out. And I found someone. And I'd rather be hungry than-- I mean, I'd rather have food on the table and have a place to live and--

MAN 1: The problem with that is once you're not young and cute anymore--

DAVID: Yeah. Then you're gone.

MAN 1: So while you're young and cute, and you're doing the sugar daddy thing, you better--

MAN 3: That's a lot of fun.

MAN 1: --you better start developing your mind along with that.

DAVID: But that's like-- but it's just a difference between necessity and desire, greed and necessity. And I'm absolutely sure he would-- he's not going to do the whole thing. He's not going to-- I just--

MAN 3: He's got too much self respect for that. I wouldn't be able to look at myself in the mirror and do that.

MAN 1: Actually--

DAVID: And people. Yeah.

MAN 1: --I did that.

DAVID: When it come-- when it comes to pride only lasts so long. And then you're like, I'm going to die. I don't want to get killed. I got to do something.

MAN 1: You're listening to *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston, and KEOS College Station. Stephen Lee, and David, and Jimmy, and Big Roy, and Chris are here. We're talking about throwaway kids or in this case, a friend of David's, who is being abused. And what I wanted to say was, there's another side of the hustling bit.

I was lucky when I was kicked out that I had a skill. And I was able to support myself by doing office work. However, I was a chubby kid all of my life, like 185 pounds--

MAN 3: Can I jump in?

MAN 1: --five foot, seven. And so I was a-- nobody looked twice at me. Now when I went to New York, I got work, but it's like, Oh, here I am. I had been cloistered most of my life. And then here I am in Manhattan.

DAVID: And your youth is more valuable than--

MAN 1: Yes. And I find that I'm staying out late and not eating a whole like I used to. And so I lose a lot of weight. And all of a sudden, men are taking interest in me. And for someone who's had their ego battered down that much by being kicked out, to have someone who not only finds you attractive but is willing to pay you money, is that's hard to resist.

MAN 3: Yeah. I can see that.

MAN 1: My lucky factor was that I kept my day job.

[LAUGHTER]

All the guys that I knew-- it was on Third Avenue in the '50s, back then in the 1960s-- 1966, as a matter of fact. Those guys were not the Times Square hustlers. So they were-- it was not a drug problem at that time, but they didn't have any other job. And I saw them having to--

DAVID: Do things that you could afford not to do.

MAN 1: Yes. And it was right then that I realized, OK. This-- OK. My ego has been satisfied. And this is not the way I want my life to go. And so that only lasted about two months.

MAN 3: Yeah, but--

MAN 1: But we did organized.

[LAUGHTER]

Yes. We did organized all of the guys.

MAN 4: The Manhattan 69ers?

MAN 1: That's right. And we-- none of us would go for less than a certain price.

MAN 4: That's [INAUDIBLE].

BIG ROY: There you go.

[LAUGHTER]

Unionized.

[LAUGHTER]

MAN 2: Unionized. Oh, man. I started that. It's like, why?

DAVID: The bidding war?

MAN 1: Yeah.

DAVID: I'll do it for \$1.

[LAUGHTER]

MAN 4: No. \$0.50, I bet you will.

BIG ROY: We just had a caller.

MAN 2: Yes.

BIG ROY: An anonymous police officer who listens to our show.

MAN 2: Oh, good.

MAN 3: Right. Glad to have you.

BIG ROY: And he--

MAN 2: So we-- this is the law here.

BIG ROY: Yes. He says, no, in regards to that 17-year-old kid. they-- at 17, you are legally an adult, except in civil matters. In other words, if paying for destruction of property or something of that, that falls on your parents. However, for all other matters, you're on your own.

MAN 2: That's what I thought.

BIG ROY: And if he wants to leave home, he can.

MAN 3: He can.

BIG ROY: And his parents can't do squat.

MAN 3: OK.

DAVID: Can he change his name at 17, on his own?

MAN 1: That, I don't know. That's a civil matter.

BIG ROY: That's a civil matter. He'd have to wait.

MAN 2: He would have to wait until he's 18.

DAVID: That's also like entering--

BIG ROY: Because that would be done in family court.

MAN 1: It's entering your contract. Yes.

DAVID: Yeah. And it's just like entering into a contract, just like he--

MAN 1: He can't do that.

DAVID: --wants to live on his own. So--

MAN 1: Yeah.

BIG ROY: You mean, he can't sign up for a record club?

[LAUGHTER]

Boy, do I remember those record-- one of those CD clubs are the same as--

MAN 1: Yeah. Exactly.

BIG ROY: I know you still get a bunch of stuff that you never even wanted. And--

MAN 1: Yes.

BIG ROY: --cost a fortune to mail it back.

MAN 1: Yes.

MAN 2: You have to lick those little magazines sticky things and [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

Yeah. Yeah. That was the most--

BIG ROY: So there it is. A police officer that was listening in.

DAVID: Thank you.

MAN 1: Thank you very much. Thank you.

MAN 3: That was very helpful.

MAN 1: And I thought there was something about entering contracts and things like that, you had to wait till you're 18. So it's the civil thing.

DAVID: Yeah. My friend would tell me like, some things is like this and this. I'm worried she's going to-- I was like, I knew some things like if your parents buy you clothes, they can't really take those clothes away. They can't just say, Oh, you're an adult now. Give me my clothes. It's like--

MAN 1: No. They are responsible for maintaining him. That's food, clothing, and shelter.

DAVID: And it's also--

MAN 3: And school.

DAVID: --it's also--

MAN 1: And school.

DAVID: --his reasons for staying--

MAN 3: Forced into a court.

DAVID: --are need the same amount of convincing as-- his misunderstanding of the law is equal to his misunderstanding of-- I don't know, it's just-- yeah, to work on it's OK to go and he wants to go. But it's-- his reasons, I don't think.

MAN 1: He's so worried.

DAVID: Yeah. It's-- he's--

MAN 1: It's the fear of the family.

MAN 2: Yeah.

MAN 1: So were they--

DAVID: And it's just like-- and it's like--

MAN 1: He wants to disappear, change his name--

DAVID: Yeah. He's like--

MAN 1: --have a new life.

DAVID: He's like 18th birthday.

MAN 1: That's it.

DAVID: Gone.

MAN 1: OK.

DAVID: It's like-- and it's like a huge part of that was getting his own vehicle, because what he has is his mom's, in his mom's name. And the things that he was going to get from his grandfather was going to be his name, but I don't know if his grandfather knows now. If his grandfather's still going to do that.

MAN 1: He should not hope for that. Yeah.

MAN 4: Don't rely on that.

MAN 1: No. No. And I think down the road, he would be much happier earning it by himself.

MAN 4: He'll appreciate it more.

MAN 1: Yeah. Than--

MAN 4: Because every time he sees that vehicle, he's going to think of it as family.

DAVID: Yeah. I mean, his grandfather doesn't know, but his grandfather is probably the closest thing to a family he has. It's like his grandfather will get him gifts for his birthday. Well, his family-- his-- literally, his parents don't know his birthday.

MAN 1: What kind of people are these?

DAVID: It's--

MAN 4: That's what I'm saying.

DAVID: Oh, I mean, just think. If there wasn't a law, would they bother having him around? I mean, just-- it just-- it's a shell shock to think people can have kids and then just treat them less than furniture.

MAN 1: Yeah.

BIG ROY: There was a volunteer who used to work here at KPFT a number of years ago. His name was Mike. And when he was 14 years old, his parents drove here into Downtown Houston, and let him off on a corner, and said they would be right back. And they never came back.

MAN 1: Is that Mike Mish?

BIG ROY: No. It's a different Mike.

MAN 1: Oh.

BIG ROY: And the thing was that his parents said that he was too much of a burden. Now, in regards to this kid's grandfather who was a Nazi in the past and all this, a strange thing about the Nazis in Germany, which is that before they came into power, gay rights was really big in Germany. And an awful lot of Nazis were gay themselves until--

MAN 1: Ernst Rome.

BIG ROY: --until Ernst Rome got shot, and then everybody else went into the closet. So his grandfather might know more about his grandson than his grandson may think. And maybe the very one that might just support him.

MAN 1: Don't think so, huh?

DAVID: Yeah.

MAN 2: That's like really wishful thinking.

DAVID: Both grandparents and just about all grandparents were like, if I have-- if any of my grandkids was gay, I would take him out and shoot him. And it's just like--

MAN 2: That's right.

DAVID: --considering-- factoring in the past of what the person said and what they've actually carried through, that's the--
- I'm angry at the world, so I'm going to go shoot the cop cars with the shotgun, and then--

[LAUGHTER]

I mean, he did that. He caught all these police cars on fire, and just hightailed it out to the ocean, where he just drifted around for a month.

BIG ROY: Well, Dave, at the Stonewall riots, I'm the guy who put the Molotov cocktail in the overturned cop car.

DAVID: Oh, yeah. But you weren't like anti-gay with a grandson to worry about. Just-- I know-- it's just the whole psycho family and-- I'm just worried about him.

MAN 1: OK. Let's go to a piece of music by a local woman by the name of Christy Ray. I first heard her at Diverse Works.

BIG ROY: And then we--

MAN 1: She's got a new EP out called *Second Draft*.

DAVID: That's right.

MAN 1: Somebody is writing here. And we're going to go to this. It's called *Gulf of Mexico*. This is the one that caught the interest of Rourke. Rourke, who does music here in the afternoons. And so here we go.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Christy Ray from her CD, *Second Draft*. And you can catch her around town. And probably hear her in the afternoons, Monday through Friday. Yeah. Rourke will be playing her. I've got something really different that I've been waiting to play. It's a-- it's part one of maybe a memoir, a book that's done on CD. This guy named Donald Currie sent me this CD called *Sex and Mayhem Part One*. And it's a story of him growing up. This part one is, anyway.

I know-- don't know how many parts there is going to be. So what he's doing is he's putting out a-- writing a book online, so to speak. However that's going to go.

MAN 2: That'd be interesting.

MAN 1: Yeah. I've been waiting to play it because there's some language problems here. And--

MAN 2: A little beep, beep?

MAN 1: Yeah. Well, the best ones, I can't play at all, because I just can't. Right. Yeah. But this is when he is in high school. And his English teacher has asked if he wanted to do some summer stock, and his parents let him. Actually, college. College, I'm sorry. This is college, not high school. So he's legal.

[LAUGHTER]

And he has this big crush on his--

MAN 2: Instructor.

MAN 1: Yes.

MAN 2: Oh, been there, done that.

MAN 1: So he's a drama student. So drama student in the '50s and the '60s. What can I tell you?

MAN 2: Right. That's a pretty picture.

MAN 1: Yes. And so this is about 10 to 15 minute piece. So sit back and enjoy this. It's called *Sex and Mayhem* by Donald Currie. And you're listening to it on *After Hours*, queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston, and KEOS College Station.

**DONALD
CURRIE:**

Speaking of lip syncing, it's a sad fact that it's no longer a rite of passage for young sissy boys. In the '50s and early '60s, it was an unspoken assumption that at some point, you would don a dress, or at least a pant suit, and do Judy or Carol.

I got started early, inspired by my sing along with Mitch Miller records, marching around my bedroom to *The Yellow Rose of Texas*, and other favorites. At some point, I thought-- and here's where the gay gene kicked in. The hell with it. Let them sing. I'll just sashay about and be fabulous.

From there, it wasn't too much of a leap into lounge, torch, and Broadway divas. Julie London for those intimate evenings in a peignoir by the fire. We're in a nutty mood, maybe a little Eartha. But for real, pick me up a blast of merman, feet firmly planted, bust held high, shaking the rafters.

My Golden age of lip syncing was surely in junior high school, in the yearly talent show, where after a conservative start, doing Perry Como's *Papa Loves Mambo*, in a jaunty Calypso getup, and winning only second place. I roared back into first as only one of two Chordettes in a drop dead Mr. Sandman. Out of all my friends, I can only convince poor Randy Pokom that he'd have lots of fun prancing around with me in a dowdy dress, a sorry wig, and ghastly makeup.

We high stepped it. We shook our booties. We jiggled our curly wigs. And we bent way over, and showed them our big balloon chichis. And the crowd went stark raving mad, drowning out that damn record, and screaming for an encore. Which, of course, we gave them, even though one of my perfumes had popped.

The only sour note in an otherwise transcendent performance came from the tired old dean of boys, Mr. Piccinini, a Clifton Webb look alike, bow tie and all, who was not amused and tried to have the curtain brought down, with no success. Since one of my pals was at the controls, and said, "The works were jammed, and tugged helplessly at the ropes." While that old square Piccinini worked on his first coronary, and the kids out front were going into apoplectic pre-adolescent pandemonium for our fag drag fanny shaking faux titty hoedown. It was a triumph, little children.

Anyway, back to Joseph, to Idaho, to destiny. Every day, the squares on my calendar inched torturously closer to their final destination. I was not learning the meaning of patience, but wallowing in the frustration of delayed gratification. And just sick to death of having to live in my parents' house, and listen to their endless nagging.

Besides, I knew that my mother was snooping around in my room when I wasn't there, and was bound to find my physique mag sooner or later. And then there would really be hell to pay. They were, at this point, one of my only comforts. Those black and white photos of oiled muscle men, imposing straps with titles like Vim and Vigor, which now seems so innocent and quaint, but were, for me, locked up in that room, a prisoner of my childhood, religious visions, reliquaries that burned in my hands.

The days did dwindled down to a precious few. And finally, at a foggy San Francisco summer morning, my parents drove me, sleepless but alert with expectation, to Joseph's Sutter Street apartment, and to the first morning of my true adult life.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

He lived in a studio apartment with a murphy bed. Still down this early morning. Still unmade and smelly, utterly delicious. The ironing board was out. And he was ironing a shirt for the trip. Preoccupied, somewhat businesslike, ironing. Gave me time to look around and imprint it all on my mind. Not much decor to speak of. A few theater posters will attract print. Expensive reel to reel tape player. Obviously, where the money went in the place. Lots of tapes, mostly classical. Plenty of books. Young Bachelor type of pad. I wish I could roll around in it and get it smell all over me.

But suddenly, I was roused from my reverie when in a breathtaking instant, the sun shot through the gloomy morning fog, and the room was lit with a curtain raising a folgens of light. Ironing board screeched shut. Murphy bed sprang up into the wall. We grabbed our suitcases, shut the door behind us, and I followed him down the hall and into the future. This was it. I was off on my first real life adventure. And I wasn't afraid, not even one little bit, just hungry for experience, itching to get some memories under my belt. Joseph and I, were going off to do summer stock together, just like two pals, two artists.

Like Kerouac and Cassady, we were on the road, and my parents couldn't medal like my mom did when she saw me reading Ferlinghetti and said, "You shouldn't read things like that. They'll do funny things to your mind." Because now, I was ready for every goddamn funny thing I could get my mind mixed up in. The funnier, the better. And I don't mean funny ha ha, I mean wacky and crazy man. I was free.

I was a free young guy, hot footing on the road out of town with my buddy Joseph right there, next to me, driving that car, with the windows down, and the hot summer wind blowing our hair all over the place. And us too just chatting away like two fellows on a spree, about Truffaut's films, and Janet's novels, and all the strange, incredible things that had happened to us each in our strange, incredible lives. And he, listening to me like I'm a regular interesting guy, not like some dopey student, not like some twerp without a tale to tell.

And I was so happy as that car sped further and further away from my childhood, from my little provincial prison of a dead end corner of the world. And I just yacked, and whooped, and let loose with every dream I'd been so desperate to share, and so certain, would never be heard by anyone, let alone, this man I so revered, who sat listening, laughing, sympathizing, and driving us both away to freedom. And I had the presence of mind to realize that this was my portion of happiness on this Earth, which might never come again quite this way. And for that moment, I prayed that I would never forget. In fact, I never did.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

And so that first summer of my manhood unraveled like a scroll painting of a winding road, with a jaunty car wending its way up into the mountains, past meadows rich with flowers over steep gorgeous ringing with cascades of water. And finally, at a turning of the road, into one hollow of a hill, which we, the tiny figures in the corner of this vast landscape canvass would call home for the rest of the summer.

We were the white pine summer players, hired to bring some excitement and income into an otherwise deserted ski resort in the Clearwater Mountains. The bill of fare was the usual crowd pleaser. The boyfriend, the miracle worker, that sort of thing. And oh, I considered myself quite the young fire brand intellectual from San Francisco up to my kits in Swedish film nightmares and decate diet tribes. I spent my nights singing--

(SINGING) Won't you Charleston with me?

Or weeping as only an older brother would over little Helen's first walk, walk.

Doing minor musicals in the second rate dramas for farm families in the middle of nowhere is not exactly a ticket to somewhere big, but it sure felt like hot stuff to me. I'm so carried away with the delirium of the adventure and the thrill of getting out of Dodge that sex actually and truly took a back seat. Until we got settled into the theater in Idaho, and I had time once again to feel the fire down below.

I took every opportunity to scramble off into my private little Sylvan forest dell, up behind the dormitory, and whack off fast and furious, usually after lunch when the rest of them were getting their beauty rest before afternoon rehearsals. And though it's embarrassing to admit it, this was just about the extent of the outdoor activity I got all summer, which is rather a pity when you think of it.

Being that we were in God's own country, fabulous Alpine mountain setting, crystal clear air. You'd think I'd take advantage of it out of the polluted city and all. But instead, it was all day inside that windowless, smoke-clogged theater, with one little break each afternoon to scamper away into the bush and blow my world. But I do remember, quite clearly, the blue, blue sky, the piney smell and cicada trill, the sticky heat of the summer afternoon air, and the deep silent peace that overtook me beneath those trees as I wiped my cummy fingers on a dangling bow.

We were a smash hit in white pine. The folks from the big city come to spread a bit of jive around in these quiet mountain valleys. We worked hard to please, taking it all very seriously. And Joseph worked us seriously and hard. He was a tough taskmaster. A stern, thorough, and perceptive director. Nothing ever seemed like schlock when you worked on it with him. He was a master at digging into the subtext of a script, mining the thinnest material for beauty and richness.

Even the boyfriend attained a Marx brothers edge. A vaguely uneasy suggestion of chaos and disaster lurking beneath the giddy surface. And what could you do with a pathetic stinker like Anastasia? Joseph pumped up a melodrama with blasting soundtrack excess and an operatic acting style that was more Maria Callas than Helen Hayes. And made you feel as if you are watching something wildly indecent and brilliant by Janet or Araba. And the amazing thing was that it worked, not like some campy joke, but more like something that felt close to revelation, compelling, and slightly threatening, like being hypnotized by a rattlesnake.

As actors, he worked us unmercifully and sadistically, employing the torture as brilliant technique of occasional tenderness to gain our compliance. By each opening night, we were all sick or half crazed with anxiety, which always added a literally fevered edge to the performance. It was this aspect of his personality, which made him so irresistible to so many. To the unformed and uncertain he surrounded himself with. His dictatorial nature was both infuriating and inspiring.

Grandma may have praised every performance I gave, but Joseph made me sweat and fret and fear for my sanity. I was his psychic slave, soon to become his sex slave at long last, on a beach, on the Oregon Coast, on a summer night, on the trip back to San Francisco.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Walk. Walk.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[MUSIC - BOB DYLAN, "RAINY DAY WOMEN"] (SINGING) They'll stone you when you're trying to be so good. They'll stone you just like they said they would. They'll stone you and say that it's the end. They'll stone you and they'll be back again. But I would not feel so all alone. Everybody must get stoned. They'll stone you when you're at the breakfast table. They'll stone you when you are young and able. They'll stone you and say good luck. They'll stone you just like you're getting hit by a truck. I would not feel so all alone. Everybody must get stoned.

[LAUGHTER]

MAN 1: Dean Becker. Hello, Dean Becker.

MAN 2: It's red.

MAN 1: Oh. Where is he?

MAN 2: Where's who?

MAN 1: Where's Dean?

MAN 3: Click the phone button.

MAN 1: It is hit. Oh, there he is.

DEAN BECKER: Hello.

MAN 1: Hey, Dean Becker. How you doing?

DEAN BECKER: I love the music.

[LAUGHTER]

MAN 1: We just-- it's just somebody's idea that would be a great piece to play in welcoming you and cultural baggage on that 2:30-- around 2:30 every Saturday night.

DEAN BECKER: It's a wonderful intro. I appreciate it.

MAN 1: You bet. You bet.

DEAN BECKER: Yeah.

MAN 1: That's from his unplugged-- MTV Unplugged.

DEAN BECKER: Oh, you can't go wrong with Bob Dylan.

MAN 1: There you go. How are you doing, Dean?

DEAN BECKER: I'm doing well. Trying to stay dry in this rainy weekend week.

MAN 1: No kidding. All of a sudden. Got wet again.

DEAN BECKER: I want to report on a couple of things people have heard us talk about in the past. Certainly, it's time to get out and vote. It's time to find the people who don't want to throw us in prison for having fun.

MAN 1: That's right.

DEAN BECKER: We've all heard the tales out of Nevada. And they tell me a lot of young people, 18-year-old, first time voters are going in. And it's looking strong there. Certainly, the bill is going to pass in San Francisco. And the city will explore the potential of growing marijuana on city property. And many of the other provisions in Arizona, Ohio, other states are looking good.

Ohio has some problems because of the wording they were forced to put on the ballot, which says something over five years, they'll spend \$273 million on treatment.

MAN 1: Yeah.

DEAN BECKER: And they didn't bring up the fact that they won't be spending about a half a billion on prisons. But that's just the way things work out sometimes. Now I got word that you probably saw it in "The Chronicle," that the war on drugs has made a bit of a turn. The feds will no longer be able to go after doctors who write recommendations for medical marijuana.

MAN 1: Really? No, I hadn't seen that.

DEAN BECKER: It came out of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. They shut down the federal assault. It ruled that the Justice Department cannot punish physicians for recommending marijuana to patients.

MAN 1: Good. Good.

DEAN BECKER: Of course, there's a federal policy of investigating and threatening to pull the licenses of doctors who recommend marijuana, violates their First Amendment right to free speech. They got word from a gentleman who had been a guest on my show a while back, Senator Claude Pierre Nolin.

MAN 1: Yes.

DEAN BECKER: And he's trying to respond to some of the people. They take potshots at that report which basically said, legalize marijuana. Free the prisoners. Get out of this single convention treaty on narcotics because it's something from a prior-- I don't know, inquisitions. They need to get out of.

MAN 1: Yeah. No kidding. No kidding.

DEAN BECKER: And here's a little bit of what he says. He says, "Let's keep it up." He says, "As I participate in radio and TV shows, and read letters to the editors and so forth, it's become clear that many said our report has been misunderstood." And he said, "First, we don't endorse recreational drug use, we would prefer to see a drug-free society. But the premise of our report is that in a free society such as ours, citizens should have the right to make their own informed decisions on their own behavior, as long as it does not inordinately harm others."

MAN 1: Right.

DEAN BECKER: There's so much logic in that. I'm trying to figure out who it is that's standing against the drug war. If you get a chance, look at this week's *Time Magazine*.

MAN 1: The liquor lobby.

[LAUGHTER]

That's who's doing it.

DEAN BECKER: Well, yes. But I mean as far as the voters. And I don't think there's enough voters to--

MAN 1: To back it.

DEAN BECKER: --to back it anymore. It's the--

MAN 1: Yeah, you're right. I don't think so either.

DEAN BECKER: And *Time Magazine* ran a huge front page article, many, many stories about marijuana this week. And they had done a poll. Their study showed that I think it was 40% were in favor of legalizing marijuana, 78% in favor of medical marijuana. And this is a nationwide study. Well, they actually did an online poll, and they asked people, what do you think? Should marijuana be legalized, yes or no? It was well over 90% said legalize it. So hey, you've got to figure that the feds have been unwilling to face a true and open debate. Asa Hutchinson gives his talks at treatment centers, at schools, rather than in--