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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

aaron, gay, peter, cumberland, prom, lynch, year, students, call, grayson, frick, hear, school, class, kids, friends, physical harm, gym, john, classmates



00:01

Billy Aaron come downstairs please. Bailey, where are you to hiding? Come down here right now young man, what are you doing in there? Open this closet door at once. What are you two doing? Billy, I've told you to keep those britches on your man. Aaron brick get out of this house immediately. Your mother is going to hear about this. Get out of that closet now.



01:05

Reflections of a rock launch, starring Benjamin Kaiser as Andrew Sandler is Peter Lynch of Michael Davis, Mr. Lunch and Kenneth Penske as John with Nora Sinclair, William Virginia maser, Joseph Tran, Michelle Gable, Bob Lazar, David Erskine, David Strasburg, Peter Hagen and Alan Zaremba written by Richard Segal, based on the book and original material by Aaron Frank, directly by Nicholas Deutsch produced by Wesley Horner.



01:49

Everybody matching here Are you hearing me here at United States District Court for the District of Rhode Island is now in session. The Honorable Chief Judge Patane presiding, roll our eyes



02:12

be seated.



02:20

In the matter of Frick versus Lynch, show that the following opinion was entered into the record may 28 1980.



02:33

Most of the time, a young man's choice of a date for the senior prom, is of no great interest to anyone other than the student, his companion and perhaps a few of their classmates. But in Aaron Frick's case the school authorities actively disapprove of his choice. The other students are upset. The community is abuzz. And the other state newspapers considered the matter newsworthy where they all of this fuss arises because Aaron Frick intended as God is another young man. The seeds of the present conflict were planted a year ago when Peter Grayson and a junior at Cumberland High School sought permission to bring a male escort to the junior prom. The principal Richard Lynch denied the request. At that time, Aaron Frick was a friend of Peter's and supported his position regarding the decision. Peter Grayson subsequently left Cumberland high school he now lives in New York City. But the emotionally charged issues surrounding his request persisted into the following year.



03:43

Finally, I want to say something about responsibility. I've been your principal for three years, and I've seen you mature during that time, some more than others. But you're all seniors now. And as seniors each and every one of you is responsible for your younger classmates. Now that'd be looking up to you to set a good example. It doesn't take much for that one problem student to ruin it for all the rest. I'm sure I'm sure most of you know the problem I'm talking about but that was last year. This year, we won't have to put up with that problem anymore. This year is going to be a good year at Cumberland high



04:32

and how are you? It's good to see you.



04:35

How was your summer? Oh,



04:37

it was okay. I'm glad to be back in school. I'm



04:39

not too thrilled about it, especially with a welcome speech like that. Yeah,



04:42

Mr. Lynch is too much. Listen, Aaron, I've got to run a call





04:48

you tonight. Okay, and I'll talk to you. Hey, Bob. Bob went up. It's me, Aaron. Aaron Frick. Yeah, I know who you are. What do you want? I just wanted to say hello, Mark. Try no see. I've been busy. Oh, sure. I understand. Where did you go? I've been looking all over the Aaron. Were you talking to him for nevermind. Let's get out of here. I'm going that way to last agbay. So long



05:42

Hello, Peter, it's me, Aaron. Cut. I'm glad you called. I was the first day back at school. It was the Pitts Lynch gave one of his great speeches. You'll never guess what he said about you. I can't wait. He said you were the problem from last year.



05:57

Wonderful. Just what I always wanted to be. Yeah. Now that



06:01

you're gone. He thinks the whole school is straight. I saw and today we're in biology together. Uh huh. Oh, and we're gonna do Thurber carnival this term great.



06:11

You're a natural for the carnival. A Bourne style, right?



06:14

No, really? Thank God for the drama club. Something else happened today. And saw this old friend of mine, Bob coat. He's going out with be divulged



06:26

the Wicked Witch of Cumberland high right.



06:31

But, you know when I said hello to Bob. He acted like he hardly even knew me. It was like our friendship didn't mean anything to him. What did you expect? I don't know. Just some sign he cared. That's all



06:45

he's one scared guy and he's afraid to get near you let alone show that he cares. Got to know that by now.



06:53

Yeah, I guess so. Peter, I really miss you. I miss you too. You wouldn't believe the impression you left on Cumberland high. If nothing else. You've gotten them to say the word gay at least 600 times a day. I do miss having you here. I'll be up late to be talking on the phone. Yeah, Dad. I was just getting up. Listen, I've got to go. I'll talk to you later. Okay, bye



07:37

Okay, who did it was? Look in the locker. Somebody spit on my clothes again. Almost.



08:01

Free Frick. What is it? I'd like permission to lead gym class early on for someone's been spinning on my clothes when I'm in the shower. It's like the fourth time it's happened.



08:11

I don't understand. What's leaving early got to do with it.



08:15

Well, it wouldn't happen if I could get dressed before anyone else.



08:19

Classes up when the bell rings those the rules if you don't like the rules, and talk to Mr. Lynch about it.



08:28

All right, I will.



08:33

And I can understand why you want to leave gym class early, but I just wonder how the other students are going to feel the other students. We don't want to look like we're favoring anyone? No, sir. You're friends with Peter Greece imagine?



08:53

Yeah, we're friends. I don't see what



08:58

don't you think the other fellows know you're friends with Peter? And don't you think that's why they're giving you such a hard time?



09:06

No, sir. I don't. I don't think Peter has anything to do with it. Nicely see. Well,



09:17

leaving gym class early won't solve the problem. Not in my opinion.



09:21

What if I transferred, took another class?



09:24

You could? Oh, of course we'd have to tell your parents. My parents. We couldn't do that without their approval. Should we call them or do you want to think it over first? It's up to you.



09:46

So would you tell him I told him to forget. I don't want my parents to know that I'm gay.



09:52

Listen, sweetheart, if they don't know by now, you should be up for an Academy Award. Very



09:56

funny, John. Sorry,





09:57

I offended you did A Metro parking lot is really hopping tonight. And look who's cruising us in a station wagon. No.



10:12

Big deal. I've seen him here before



10:28

sometimes I think I'm a Rock Lobster. No claws. Always hiding in my little shell. always afraid.



10:41

Free to walk.



10:43

Afraid of myself. What?



10:47

Why so serious? What's the matter with you tonight?



10:52

I just feel so helpless sometimes. You know, Peter wouldn't have taken that crap from lunch.



10:59

You still miss him, don't



11:00

you? Yeah. I miss him a lot. Peter was the first person I ever met who was proud of being gay. I want to be proud. Oh, I don't know what I want. I just don't want to lie and hide anymore. That's all. Like Peter. Peter had all the nerve



11:26

and look where it got him. Kicked out of the house by his parents. He had to leave town. on

and look where it got him. Kicked out of the house by his parents. He had to leave town, on account of that stupid problem



11:34

of being yourself means getting into trouble. And maybe staying out of trouble isn't such a great idea. Listen, honey, you



11:40

don't have to tell me that. I've always been myself. But pride or no pride. You don't pick a fight. Unless you know you can win it



11:54

Aaron, you've got to go easier on yourself. Give yourself time



12:07

Do you want some of this? No. Go ahead.



12:12

Check out Mr. Muscles over there. Which one in the Honda? Not him? The hunky number in the little Chevy? Oh yeah. It's getting kind of crowded. I know. Isn't it fabulous? So many men so little time. Aaron, could you come over here? Yeah, Dad. What is it? Do you know anything about this? No. No, it's the first time I've seen it.



12:45

Now, why in the hell would somebody spray paint gay on our front door



12:49

caught? I don't know. Maybe it was some kids playing around.



12:55

You're probably right.



12:57



12:57

Anyhow, there's some paint remover in the garage. Why don't you clean it off? Sure. Oh, and Aaron. Yeah. I wouldn't tell your mother about this. It might upset her.



13:08

Okay, fine. I wasn't gonna say anything anyways.



13:17

Hey, what are you doing in the library? Don't tell anyone. I'm cutting to class. I don't care what you're cutting. I want to talk to you. Last night, I was hearing back from Providence. This old guy picks me up. He was like in his 40s. So we're driving along. And he starts asking me if I'd ever made it with another man before that he pulls off the road. And he starts putting the moves on me. She says I didn't know what to do. So I jumped out of the car. And I waited until he left and I got another ride.



13:57

What are you telling me this for?



14:00

Because you're a fat man. Everybody knows that. And I sort of thought you could explain it to me. Nothing like being in school queer.



14:10

Look, what do you call the gay helpline and tell them what happened. I'll give you the



14:15

I will I call it something else.



14:19

Yeah, what's that?



14:21

I want you to give me a blowjob. What are you crazy? Come on. Just do it. That euphoric? Yes, sir. Are you supposed to be in gym class today? Well, there's a reason why did for late. You're

coming with me. Shuffle now, man. Just call that number. I said move it. Frick. All right. All right. I'm coming.



14:42

I thought we had an understanding, Aaron. I thought that you were going to work through this little problem of yours,



14:48

Mr. Lynch. It's just that gym class. You don't know what it's like in there for me. But



14:53

that's not what we're here to talk about. What it's like for you is it Eric?



14:57

Then what are we here to talk about? Tell



14:59

us had tone of voice with me. And I'll show you what you get for. You know what this is now. It's your attendance report. It says you've skipped gym class four times in the last two weeks. I could suspend you for that. But regular suspension would be too lenient. And so I'm giving you three days of in house suspension instead. And I don't want ever to hear about this problem of yours again. Do you understand that Aaron?



15:29

I understand. I don't think it's fair. I could care less what



15:33

you think. Now get your books and go to suspension home



15:48

this is Peter Grayson. I'm not home right now. But you can leave a message right after the beat by Peter. It's Erin. I was just calling to say hello. John and I are going to Newport to see Rocky Horror again. And we'll probably cruise the Metro parking lot after that. So anyways, I'll call you

back later tonight Bye



16:30

He would definitely too much when you shower the entire front row with John. You've never looked more gorgeous. That gown put me in magenta and eat your hearts we've got to go back next week. Slow down almost at the Metro we mustn't look to the places empty Where's everywhere we've gone looking for someone new can ask you to do nothing fucking clear



17:12

if you want us out. You have to make us



17:16

he's got a crowbar. Let's get out of here. Did you see him he wanted to be lucky to get out of



17:26

damnit. Are we supposed to go?



17:40

There will be a short quiz tomorrow on chapters nine and 10. That's all for today. Aaron, could you stay after class? I want to speak with you. Yes, Mrs. Murdock. What is the meaning of this paper you handed in the other day?



18:04

I thought I was doing the assignment.



18:07

The assignment was to write a paper on a topic that interests you. Homosexuality is an improper subject,



18:15

but I am interested in it. Well, no one else is.





18:21

You're getting an F on this report



18:30

cut it out. Leave him alone. Well, Bob, what do you care? Hello, Loughran. Oh, hello, be. Hi, Bob. We were wondering if you asked anyone to the prom yet? No, I thought I'd skipped the prom this year. What's the clincher? Find any boys to go with?



18:53

Yes, Mr. Lynch, I gotta complain to me.



18:56

Do you have an appointment to see me?



18:57

No, I don't need an appointment. Look at this. Look at my back. Do you know what that is? It's what's left to the animal parks they're throwing at me and biology class.



19:04

Well, I'm sorry to hear that. But you'll have to take it up with the assistant principal Mr. To go.



19:09

No, I want to take it up with you. I want to know what you're going to do about it.



19:13

Well, Aaron, I've said it before and I'll say it again. Your classmates know all about your friendship with Peter Grayson. What happened is to be expected



19:24

that gives them the right to call me faggot and unclear because I know Peter Grayson,



19:29



19:29

you should have thought of that before you started spending time with him.



19:32

I thought you were supposed to protect the students. Every student including me,



19:36

I've heard just about enough from you Aaron.



19:38

You're going to hear a whole lot more from now



19:39

on. Now. You just wait a minute young man I'm not finished with you yet. Well, I



19:43

finished because if this is your idea of protection, I'm better off on my own.



19:58

Hello, Peter It's me, Aaron. What time is it about two in the morning? Listen, I did it. I finally told my parents I'm gay. It's great. How they take it. Well, my mother kind of suspected. But my father. He just broke down and cried. You're kidding. No, it was pretty bad. He was sitting at the kitchen table. Didn't say anything. He tears just rolled down his face. That's okay. You'll get over it. God, I hope so. It was awful. How do you feel? That's the important thing. I feel all right. I really do. I mean, there were so many times when I'd wonder did they know? God? All the lies I told to keep them from finding out about me. They didn't even realize who their own son was. What it was like at school what I've been going through. I just couldn't keep living like that anymore. I had to tell them. You did the right thing. Yeah, I guess so. But you know what's really funny? Now that I've told my parents, I feel like telling everybody, the whole world.



21:27

So what's stopping you? Go ahead and do it?



21:44

Dear Aaron, you asked me what I think about you 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 at the grab that publicity. That was because no one knew Peter, he just showed up out of the 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 have such ill motive so easily. But this is what they will think. One, Peter made you do it, too. 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 and you want to do what?



22:52

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



22:56

And what makes you think you can do that? Well, you see, sir,



22:58

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.



23:06

Absolutely not.



23:07

Can I talk to the student council about it?



23:09

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, Erin. We went through all this last year, or have you forgotten what happened to your friend Peter Grayson? I haven't forgotten.



23:25

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 it. Yes. If I had to.



23:39

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



23:44

Yeah. Well, we'll see about that. Hello, is Heron Frick there speaking? Aaron. This is John Ward returning your call.



23:57

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.



24:10

So they'll take the case. You're really gonna go through with



24:14

it. I really am. Erin. That's fantastic.



24:17

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



24:25

what are you thinking?



24:26

There's be divulge. If I tell her the whole school note about 30 seconds. They don't call her magic mouth for nothing. Hi, Dee, how's it going? What's it to you? What would you say if I told you I'm going to the prom with Peter Grayson as my date?



24:43

Me works. I think they'll let him do it. He's just trying to get publicity. You gotta admit he's got a lot of guts. Yeah, it's crazy. That Peter so he wants to bring a guy to the prom. So what? In our reputation what replications somebody says he's going to court yeah here he's gonna lawyer and everything. There's places turning into Gay Town USA. I don't care what anybody says. okay by me, you don't really get me Lynch didn't even ask us what we thought about a prick better watch out because a lot of kids around here are gonna get pretty damn pissed at him I'm gonna bash your fagot skull



25:42

he's bleeding just stood there and watched. You could have helped me. I'm going to the nurse



26:03

after Aaron filed suit in this court, an event reported by the Rhode Island and Boston papers as student punched and kicked him in the school hallway. The unprovoked surprise assault necessitated five stitches under Aaron's right, I 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 escorts principal or assistant principal, between classes. No further incidents have occurred as of May 26, the day that this hearing began.



26:42

Aaron, would you please tell us why you want to go to your senior prom with another man?



26:47

I feel I have the right to go just like any other student. And I don't understand why shouldn't be allowed to go with Peter.



26:53

Do you consider going to the prom to be a political statement?



26:57

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 has demonstrated. And some of the kids are following.



27:06

Has that prejudice made you uncomfortable in school?



27:09

Yes, it has. But I've managed to go about my daily routine. And I can't see why should be separated from the other kids when it comes to the prom.



27:18

Have you ever been separated from the other kids at Cumberland? High because you are gay?



27:22

No. I asked to be transferred out of gym class because some kids are picking on me. But Mr. Lynch wouldn't allow it.



27:29

Aaron, do you have any heterosexual friends at Cumberland high?



27:32

Yes. One of them is sitting in the courtroom right now.



27:36

And how did they feel about your decision to sue Mr. Lynch?



27:38

They have faith in me to make my own decisions. They're supporting me.



27:44

Are you involved with any in school activities?



27:47

I'm in the drama club. I just received a thespian Award for outstanding performance in the Thurber carnival.



27:52

Have you met all the requirements for graduation?



27:55

Yes, I even pass PE this year.



27:59

school policy is that if a student meets all the requirements for graduation, you may purchase prom tickets. Is that right?



28:05

Yes. Plus I sold my 10 Senior raffle tickets already.



28:08

Thank you, Aaron. I have no further questions, your honor. Your witness?



28:17

Just the frick. You tell the court what is the meaning of the word gay?



28:21

It's the physical and emotional love shared by two people of the same sex. Which is something I have 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.



28:35

How many dates if you haven't met



28:37

objection, sustained. Counselor, Mr. Frick's private life is not at issue here.



28:43

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



28:52

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



28:58

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 park?



29:07

Am I what objection counsel was attempting to intimidate the witness?



29:12

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



29:19

haven't ever heard it's Exhibit A.



29:21

Would you put your head on Peter shoulder and a few slow dance together?



29:26

Objection. Aaron cannot speculate on his future impulses.



29:29

Overruled.



29:30

"I don't think I should be here."

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



29:33

I see. Aren't you wearing a bandage over your right eye? Would you please remove an objection your



29:41

bandage is enough proof of physical harm to Aaron



29:44

precise. Aaron has suffered physical harm because of his desire to attend the prom with a male date club check should



29:52

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



30:00

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?



30:08

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



30:28

widen their range of experience. Well,



30:32

I think if the other students see us at the Pleasant Valley Country Club, they'll say, Wow, gay people really aren't human beings with constitutional rights.



30:39

This promised to be held at the Pleasant Valley Country Club. Yes, Your Honor. I play golf, everyone. Oh, really? Yes, it's quite relaxing.



30:47

I can imagine that being a judge has a chair of pressures. That may



30:51

be a gigantic understatement. Does the defense have any further questions? No, Your Honor. is gorgeous recessed until 1030 tomorrow morning. Anyone needs me I can be found at the Pleasant Valley Country Club.