

Delusional
by
Greg Banks

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NARRATOR

INT. RASCALS COMEDY CLUB -- EVENING (PRESENT DAY)

Greg is onstage, the house is packed

GREG

Anybody here have a happy
childhood?

(Sarcastic)

What was that like? I wasn't
abused, my parents would NEVER do
that, 'cause in order to abuse a
child, you got to spend a little
time with them. I guess they were
no worse than any other brutally
repressive regime.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, 1978 -- NIGHT

Greg (13) is seated on the couch in his family's basement.
His father is on another couch. The Decor: classic 70s
modern.

DAD

When a man and a woman love each
other, they engage in sexual
relations in order to have a
family.

ANGLE ON GREG'S REACTION

Greg betrays no emotion.

DAD

Any questions?

GREG

Why Dad? To re-create this magic?

My father was a member of the entrepreneurial class. Which
is like falling through the looking glass: what's up is down,
what's black is white.

INT. -- CONTINUOUS

A fat-ish family is seated around the dinner table. A
comfortable home, well-decorated. Everyone wears glasses
with thick black frames.

Three kids (uncomfortable, on-edge) silent, over-eating,
mother serving, father talking and eating.

ANGLE ON

Joseph (age 10), sits back to the
window, plays with his string
beans.

Father is a large man with a shirt and tie.

DAD

I talked to Bill McGinley today

DAD (CONT'D)

(To sister at his left
hand)

He's a banker, they're all scum.
The only time they'll lend you
money is when you don't need it.

MOM

How is he?

DAD

If banks aren't in the news,
they're making tons of money.
Then, when they get in trouble,
they line up for a federal bailout.

He pats her on the head.

ANGLE ON

Joseph is fidgeting. He doesn't
want to be at the table, naturally
because the nightly dinner ritual
is like torture.

DAD

(to Joseph)
Eat your vegetables.

DAD (CONT'D)

(to mom)

I think I'm going to get that order
for Kamco's fall line. I'm going
to have to add new capacity. I'm
going to build a new plant with 85
machines all producing one part per
machine.

MOM

Is that a good idea?

DAD
 (Annoyed)
 I know what I'm doing,

ANGLE ON

Suddenly, it's quiet. Too quiet. Mom senses there's something wrong. She looks around. Oh, it's Joseph, he's turning blue, he's choking.

MOM
 (to dad)
 Joe!

Dad reacts with characteristic aggressiveness. He reaches over grabs Joseph by the belt, turns him upside down and sticks his finger into his mouth, pulling out an eight inch strand of linguini.

INT. SILVER SPURS COFFEE SHOP -- DAY

Greg talks with his drag queen friend, Cookie. Cookie has five o'clock shadow and sounds like Tallulah Bankhead after a night of heavy smoking, she's a big hit in the drag world.

COOKIE
 How can you be straight? You're a bottom, honey.

GREG
 Yeah, but if you're going to be gay; it doesn't make sense to be a top. I mean, I might as well be straight then.

COOKIE
 Thank God all gay men don't think like you.

What's the matter sweetie? You look down.

GREG
 I don't know, I'm not happy. I've been dating for years and I can't meet any guy that I want to spend time with.

COOKIE
 What about John?

GREG

He says he's not ready for a relationship. I'm like, really? What does that mean? Is he waiting for some mythical alignment of the planets for the right "relationship" conditions? Or, is it simpler than that, is it a fear of intimacy?

COOKIE

Men are shit! But, you'll find someone.

GREG

Yeah, I can find guys, but it's always the same. I'm starting to worry, maybe they're all the same.

COOKIE

Maybe what?

GREG

Maybe; ; Maybe, homosexuality is keeping me from actually living. I don't know how valid the whole concept is for me.

COOKIE

What are you saying, are you saying you're straight?

GREG

Maybe I am.

COOKIE

Well, that'll bring you down. You're NOT straight sweetie, don't talk like that.

(She crosses herself,
dunking a donut in her
coffee, she's not too
genteel.)

GREG

I don't know, I still find women attractive, I always have.

COOKIE

I do to! That's why I dress like them. But, you don't have to throw your life away.

GREG

You sound like the religious right,
except from a parallel universe.
And, I have not been able to find a
guy I want to spend "forever" with.

COOKIE

Forever's too long. Start small.
Start with "for tonight."
(Solemnly praying)
God, if only Greg could find
someone to meet tonight in the back
room of the Cock. I promise he'll
be a better person. He'll start
recycling, stop using aerosols. Do
you have a show tonight?

GREG

No.

COOKIE

Then you're going to the Cock.

GREG

I don't need to meet some shut down
banker on Tina at the cock!
Thanks.

COOKIE

You won't know if you that if don't
go.

GREG

I know. I've had enough of that.

COOKIE

That's exactly why you can't be
straight.

GREG

What do you mean?

COOKIE

Because you've had enough of that.
Sweetie, tell me one thing, do you
like gay sex?

GREG

Yeah, very much.

COOKIE

Have you ever sucked cock?

GREG
Come on. Of course.

COOKIE
(pause)
Well, do you like to suck cock?

GREG
(pause)
Well, yeah, of course.

COOKIE
You're gay! See you're cured. You should have come to see me earlier. Now, just accept it, work with what you've got and move on. Aren't you glad aunt Cookie is here to keep your world on track. Don't you feel better?

GREG
Not really.

COOKIE
(Fixing her lips)
You will, as soon as you get some hot 20-year-old college boy to rock your world. You'll be right as rain, sugar.
(Checking watch)
(scene?)
Shit, got to go. Where is our check?
(to waitress sweet as pie)
Check, sweetie. »
(To Greg)
Can you believe her? She can't figure out we're done and we're going to need the check?

GREG
She must be new.

COOKIE
Buck up, sweetheart. Maybe I'll see you later -- at the Cock?

GREG
Sure, what the Hell.

INT. MICHAEL'S OFFICE -- DAY

Greg is on the couch, Greg's therapist, Michael is straight, not that you can tell in any way.

GREG

I feel pretty good. Everything's going pretty well.»

MICHAEL

So, what about your love life?

GREG

I don't know, I really don't want to date.

MICHAEL

Why not?

GREG

Well, I don't want to date a guy.

(beat)

I just can't see myself as an old gay man. I mean all these guys that were so hot in their 20s and 30s are now --- middle aged. It's just not as hot as it once was. Suddenly, I'm sleeping with a guy that looks like the headmaster at my high school. Or, Spalding Gray. Youth hides a lot of ugly. Now they're all like thinning hairlines, white legs and black socks. It's fucked up. But, there is no way I could date anyone younger than like 30 anymore. It's just too much work. I don't have that kind of energy.

MICHAEL

Well, who says you have to?

GREG

Have to what?

MICHAEL

Date a guy. Look, you've talked about this for years. You're attracted to women.

GREG

Well, what am I supposed to do?
Hi, I'm gay, I think, but I'm
trying to understand my continued
attraction to women? And, you're
the lucky girl. Aren't you lucky?
How about coffee? Wanna have my
child? It's crazy, Christ it's
like a Christopher Durang play.

MICHAEL

Well, why not? Put it out there.
You never know. Put an ad online.
Tell them you're good looking,
successful, bisexual, want to have
a relationship with a woman who
gets it. Hey, you're a catch. You
dress well, you've got great taste.
You listen, you understand women,
you've got a unique perspective.
It's all about attitude.

(beat)

Or, don't mention it. You're just
going for coffee, see how it goes,
you don't have to tell all your
inner most secrets on the first
date.

GREG

It seems kind of; I don't know;
disingenuous?

MICHAEL

Look, if you were interviewing for
a job, you wouldn't tell them you
beat your wife, would you?

GREG

Look at me, do you think I'm
straight? I haven't had a
relationship with a woman since
Reagan was in office, doesn't that
bode ill for a sudden sexual
turnaround? Maybe, I'm just
another self-loathing homosexual.

MICHAEL

You're right.

GREG

What do you mean I'm right?

MICHAEL

Look, let's face it. The majority of my patients are women and gay men. So, the odds are against you.

GREG

(Agreeing)

There you go.

(Pause)

Well, that hurt.

MICHAEL

But, that doesn't mean anything. You've got a lot of courage to face this, nothing's black and white. We're all somewhat gay, somewhat straight. But, you didn't have any good male role models. If you did, you'd find that men can be sensitive, artistic, creative and male.

GREG

You know, heterosexuality sounds so good; in theory. What time is it?

MICHAEL

We've got like two minutes.

GREG

That's not much time.

MICHAEL

It's enough.

GREG

A lifetime. What the fuck? Why not?

MICHAEL

Yeah, why not, you've got nothing to lose.

INT. COMEDY CELLAR -- NIGHT

Greg onstage.

GREG

Dating is hard. It's no wonder people stay married. Just the prospect of dating is enough to keep you in a shitty relationship.

(MORE)

GREG (CONT'D)

"Sure, he's got a drinking problem, and he's on dialysis and that artificial lung is gross. But, what am I going to do? Date? Why not just slam my balls in a desk drawer?"

INT. GREG'S MIND -- CONTINUOUS

A fog gives way to a police lineup of Greg's usual masturbation subjects. Greg's standing behind the one way mirror with Detective Lenny Briscoe.

LENNY BRISCOE

Bring in the usual masturbation suspects, please.

A Roman Centurian, a football player, a mounted police officer (on horseback!), A hunky blond farm boy with hat and overalls, no shirt, of course, piece of hay in his mouth), an executive (Clark Kent type, with glasses), a dude in leather all shuffle on to the lineup stage.

LENNY BRISCOE (CONT'D)

What'll it be this time?

GREG

(long pause)

I; ; ; Um.

LENNY BRISCOE

(Sarcastic)

Take your time, we've got all day!

GREG

The Centurian.

LENNY BRISCOE

Again?

GREG

Well.?

LENNY BRISCOE

Hey buddy, it's your fantasy.

(Lenny's bored)

You're sure?

GREG

I'm sure. Wait! The blonde farmboy.

LENNY BRISCOE
You're sure?

GREG
I'm sure.
(Lenny shoots him a look)
I'm sure!

LENNY BRISCOE
(Leans into the
microphone)
OK, he wants the farmboy, the rest
of you can go.

The others shuffle out, kind of dejected.

LINE UP GUYS

Awww.

(mumble, mumble)

GREG
Wait!

LENNY BRISCOE
Hey Buddy, I've got three other
cases I'm working on.

GREG
I'm sorry. I want to see women.

LENNY BRISCOE
(Smiling)
Why didn't you say so?

The men disappear, lights go out, women shuffle on to the stage, lights on. They're all either fat-ish or bookish women (or both) with glasses, like his mother and sister.

GREG
Lenny, come on.

LENNY BRISCOE
Hey, it's the best I could do on
short notice. Next time call
ahead.

EXT. GREG'S CAR -- EVENING

Greg and his comedy buddy (Fletcher) head out to Pennsylvania for some road gigs. Greg confesses his dilemma.

GREG
I've know you for how long?

FLETCHER
I don't know, 3, maybe 4 years.

GREG
I need your help.

FLETCHER
OK?

GREG
I think I may be straight. I've
decided to start dating women.

FLETCHER
(Incredulously)
Really?

GREG
Yeah.

FLETCHER
Why is that?

GREG
Well, it's something that have been
bothering me, I don't know if I'm
gay or if I'm just acting gay.

FLETCHER
You lost me.

GREG
Well, I still find women
attractive, in a sexual way. And,
sometimes I worry that I'm gay
because I'm lazy, because it's
harder, it's more of a challenge to
be with women.

FLETCHER
Maybe it's harder because you're
gay.

GREG
Maybe, but if I was truly gay, why
would I have these unresolved
feelings? I mean, do you have any
unresolved homosexual feelings?

FLETCHER
No.

GREG

Well maybe you're a bad example.

INT. BLUESTAR ROADHOUSE, BUCKS COUNTY -- NIGHT

Greg and Fletcher arrive at their show.

HOST

Can I help you?

FLETCHER

We're the comics. Is Joe around?

HOST

OK, I'll let him know. Have a seat.

(He motions to a table,
and heads to the back.)

Greg and Fletcher take a seat in a booth, behind them there is a separate room with a stage and a mic. A waitress appears assuming they're customers.

WAITRESS

Can I get you something?
(She's smiling at Greg)

GREG

Sure, I'll have a diet soda.

FLETCHER

A coke please. Do you have any food?

WAITRESS

(The waitress motions to
the table card which
lists the menu)

Are you the comedians?

GREG

Why do we look funny?

WAITRESS

Well, you don't look like you're from around here. Are you funny?

FLETCHER

No, we're terrible. We're possibly the least funny men on earth, it's tragic really.

WAITRESS

(Amused)

I'm sorry to hear that, I guess I should collect as you go then.

GREG

That would be smart. We're not your traditional comics, we don't go for laughs really,

FLETCHER

No, we don't.

GREG

We try to instill a sense of aching melancholy.

FLETCHER

That's right. When they're crying, we know we've down our job.

GREG

Then we get beaten up and run out of town. That's what we can look forward to.

FLETCHER

What's your name?

WAITRESS

Lori.

Hi, Lori, I'm Fletcher and this is Greg.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Hi.

(Shaking Greg's hand,
smiling broadly)

GREG

Nice to meet you.

WAITRESS

Nice to meet you.

(To Fletcher)

Do you know what you want to eat?

FLETCHER

Give me a couple of minutes

WAITRESS

I'll get your sodas.

FLETCHER

I think Lori likes you.

GREG

Ya' think so.

FLETCHER

Mos def. Lori's also very HOT.

GREG

(With a sense of ennui)
Oh really, I hadn't noticed.

FLETCHER

Normally, I would jump on the whole "Lori" angle, but as your newly appointed heterosexual advisor, I'm going to make an exception. This is a great opportunity for you to begin your march to heterosexuality, away from the penis. It's like Sherman's March to the sea.

GREG

(Not sold on the idea)
Do you think I'm ready? It feels like it's too soon. I'm in a very vulnerable place.

FLETCHER

Greg, your mission tonight is to go home with Lori. I hope you appreciate the sacrifice I making for you.

GREG

She's probably got a boyfriend.

FLETCHER

Whoa. Just hold on, that is WAY the wrong attitude. Greg, being straight is not that same thing as being a successful heterosexual. There are a lot of straight men out there that are single and unhappy because they don't have balls. Successful conquest of the female is strictly a numbers game. The more women you hit on, the better your odds. The man who demurs from battle, is the man who get's no tang. No guts no glory. It's very much like success as a comic.

(MORE)

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

The more stagetime you get, the better comic you become. First rule of successful heterosexual conquest is Maybe being a shrinking violet works as a gay man, but not in the heterosexual world. Here you must kill to survive. It's about spreading the seed. You need to spread it far and wide. You're progeny must rule the world.

GREG

I didn't realize it was so Napoleonic.

FLETCHER

Well, it is. You have to be ruthless. In the hetero world, you must assume that every woman is available until presented by concrete evidence to the contrary and even then ---- rules are made to be broken. Also, you must assume that every guy is your challenger, they must be destroyed. You have to be ruthless. If you want to follow through on your plan, you must banish all negative thinking from your mind. And, once more thing, straight men never order diet soda.

GREG

That's ridiculous.

FLETCHER

I don't make the rules. Let me give you some pointers since I know you're new to this. First, Lori has no ring on her finger.

And, a woman with no ring is fair game.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Second, Lori was making eye contact with you, so Lori is definitely game. I may be wrong, but I think in the homo world, it's much easier to hook up. Men are generally ready for sex at any time, with women you need to work.

GREG

I had no idea there was so much to
it.

FLETCHER

Well, there is.