

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE
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CHANGE...
ABC 1/2 HR
EP/W: ALLAN LOEB

INT. A WEDDING - DAY

PRIEST
You may kiss the bride!

And he does...

The music strikes and the room breaks into tears and applause.

MEET RICK JORDAN

He's the best man. 33, good looking, athletic... nice-guy decent, not nice-guy weak.

And he couldn't be happier for his best friend, WAYNE.

A groomsman named BLAIR stands next to Rick. Blair's 40, slick, over-the-top and insufferable... a peacock without conscience.

All while clapping and through plastic smiles--

BLAIR
This sucks. Another one bites the dust.

RICK
He's happy.

BLAIR
Screw him. This isn't about him. This is about me. I just lost another wing man.

RICK
You still have me.

BLAIR
C'mon Rick -- we both know your heart's not in it anymore.

As Rick stops clapping and loses that smile...

CUT TO:

TABLE 1

Salads have been dropped down. The band's playing. People are table hopping and dancing.

Find Rick sitting with another groomsman, NESBY, 34, balding, glasses and schlubby.

Nesby downs his drink, he's a little buzzed.

NESBY
I should've gotten married ten years ago.

RICK
To who?

NESBY
Doesn't matter. I'm a married
suffering the life of a single.

RICK
C'mon, Nesby.

NESBY
It's true. You know it's true.
Blair's a natural bachelor...
animalistic and narcissistic.
And Wayne's been with Diana
forever... in effect married long
before today.
(a beat)
I'm the odd man out. Look at me,
Rick.

He does.

RICK
What about me?

NESBY
You? You make no sense.

Rick laughs...

RICK
Thanks.

NESBY
Well, c'mon-- I mean... Madeline.

RICK
(not this again)
Jesus.

NESBY
Why would you break up with her?
She's amazing. Look at her.

And Nesby looks over to one of the bridesmaids.

MADELINE STONE, 28, breathtaking and sweet. She's laughing and
dancing with the bride's GRANDFATHER. Rick doesn't look.

RICK
I wasn't feeling it.

Rick slowly looks up to catch Madeline's gaze... he immediately
looks away.

NESBY

You said that about Rachel and Kristie. All great girls.

And before Rick can respond, the groom joins them. This is Wayne, 33, a two-hundred and fifty pound teddy bear of a man.

WAYNE

Stay clear of the chicken, something funky's going on there.

(then)

I think I made a big mistake with this whole marriage thing.

They both look at him.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Kidding.

And they all break into laughter. But just as Nesby looks away, Wayne mouths to Rick... "I'm not kidding!"

NESBY

My mother always says weddings are the best place to meet a woman but you can never tell who's single.

RICK

That's right. Because women feel compelled to bring a date even if it's not someone they're dating.

NESBY

Exactly. A dude in a tux is like an accessory to them. They'll choose anybody.

As Wayne agrees...

WAYNE

Alright... Here's the run down.

Wayne gives them the run-down on the available bridesmaids.

WAYNE (CONT'D)

Brenda's divorced. Her husband left her last year for the woman who did the financing on their house. She's looking for love but she may end up crying after sex. So, I don't know... buyer beware.

Wayne points out JENNA, 24, who is pounding shots with Blair at the bar.

WAYNE (CONT'D)
My now sister-in-law, Jenna.
Total slut.

RICK
And Blair's being true to his
radar and nature.

Then Wayne points to Madeline.

WAYNE
And of course, Madeline Stone.
Now normally she would be out of
our collective league... but some
idiot just inexplicably broke her
heart for no apparent reason. So
who knows? She may be
vulnerable.

Rick takes Wayne's jibe in stride.

And the bride, DIANNA, plops down on Wayne's lap and turns to
Nesby.

DIANNA
You should talk to Brenda.

NESBY
Wayne said she might cry after
sex.

DIANNA
Nesby... let's be realistic.

NESBY
Good point.

And Nesby gets up and heads over to Brenda.

DIANNA
Rick, tell my new husband to
shave his goatee.

WAYNE
Tell my new wife I'm not shaving
it!

Rick just shrugs.

DIANNA
We're married -- I own half your
face now and I want it gone.

WAYNE
Not happening.

DIANNA
It's dated.

Blair heads over...

DIANNA (CONT'D)
Blair, isn't Wayne's goatee lame?

BLAIR
True story. Makes you look like
a fag.

Blair grabs Dianna's hand.

BLAIR (CONT'D)
Dance with me.

As he leads her toward the dance floor...

BLAIR (CONT'D)
I think I'm going to bang your
sister tonight.

DIANNA
(rolling her eyes)
Big accomplishment there.

After Dianna and Blair are gone, Wayne turns to Rick.

WAYNE
I might have made a huge mistake
here.

RICK
Wayne--

WAYNE
No. I'm freaking out. You heard
her -- she owns half my face now!

RICK
Look -- this is no different than
before. For the last ten years,
all you did was talk about
breaking up with Dianna but you
never could.

WAYNE
Right.

RICK
So nothing's changed except now
you're married.

WAYNE
Right -- it's just a word.
(then)
Thank you. I feel better.

Rick stands...

RICK
Good.

And as he crosses the dance floor, we notice Madeline fire a glance at him from across the room.

AT THE BAR

Rick moves to the bar, in need of drink. He takes a deep breath, orders a drink and turns to be face to face with...

MADELINE
I still can't get my mind around this.

RICK
Madeline.

And she launches in with...

MADELINE
Okay, the fear of commitment thing makes sense but not with you, Rick. I've seen it before, I know what it looks like... and that wasn't it.

RICK
I just wasn't--

MADELINE
-- feeling it. Blah, blah, blah.

Rick finished his drink with a big swig.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
It couldn't have been the bigger, better, deal thing... because we both know that's not going to happen.

Rick doesn't disagree...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
So, that leaves us with the bored of the sex thing.

RICK
Madeline, look... I don't think this is healthy.

MADELINE

But here's the thing, Rick. The sex was never that great. I looked at it as something we could grow into.

RICK

I thought it had its moments.

MADELINE

No, Rick. It didn't.

And she just looks at him. Shakes her head...

MADELINE (CONT'D)

I just can't get my mind around this...

... and goes.

TABLE 32

Drink now in hand, Rick greets a group of older couples. His mother, SUSIE JORDAN, stands and gives him a big hug.

SUSIE

Look at how handsome you are.

RICK

How are you Dad?

Rick's father, BARRY, looks up to his son...

BARRY

I can't eat red meat anymore that's how I am.

RICK

Well, you're cholesterol's down and that's what's important.

BARRY

I eat like a rabbit now, it's pathetic.

Rick nods.

SUSIE

Dianna looked so beautiful up there. I remember when Wayne first met her.

Barry announces to the table.

BARRY

They had their first sex in our bed.

RICK
Dad--

SUSIE
It's true. We were out of town
and Rick threw a party.

BARRY
And they would've gotten away
with it if it weren't for the
blood.

Mortified, Rick smiles to the table of older couples.

RICK
Hello, Mrs. Mankovitz.

As Suzie sits Rick down...

SUSIE
When are you going to give us a
wedding like this?

RICK
There it is.

BARRY
Screw the wedding. We need a
male heir to keep the name going.

RICK
I know, Dad.

Barry explains to the other couples...

BARRY
My retarded brother couldn't have
a son.

SUSIE
Okay, honey... try to relax...

BARRY
(declaring)
Moron has five children, you'd
think one of them would find a
way to have a penis.

Calming him down...

SUSIE
Remember what Dr. Rosenthal said
about getting upset.

And she looks at her son in the eyes, asks...

SUSIE (CONT'D)
What was wrong with Madeline?

Inside of a frustrated sigh...

RICK
I wasn't feeling it.

Grabbing Rick's hand.

SUSIE
You always say you're "not
feeling it" when you break up
with these girls.

Barry goes back to eating his food.

BARRY
What's there to feel?

RICK
I don't know. Love?

Not looking up from his salad... mouth full...

BARRY
Love's a myth.

EXT. RECEPTION HALL - NIGHT

The sounds of the wedding in full swing waft from the hall.

A little drunk and frustrated, Rick heads out into the cool night. He nods to a few smokers and heads down the street, past a construction site.

And Rick leans against the scaffolding and exhales... trying to clear his head. And he hears something from above. Something bad. A creaking that grows louder and ends in a CRASH.

A huge steel girder has broken off from the site and is heading a million miles an hour right at Rick.

STEEL GIRDER'S POV

Shooting down toward Rick Jordan, his eyes wide in fear looking right at us, his whole life racing through his mind.

We're racing down to kill him...

AND BAM

DARKNESS

For a definitive moment... until we pull back from the black of night... to that steel girder on the ground...

And right next to it... Rick's feet.

And we pull up to find...

RICK JORDAN

Standing there... inches away from the where the girder
landed... stunned and shaking... completely blown away..

Mind racing, heart thumping, Rick looks at the girder then back
up to the sky then back to the girder then straight ahead...

And all he says is...

RICK
Oh my God... I'm gay.

CLOSE ON RICK

Now quiet and resolute. His life has been changed.

RICK

I guess I've known all along, I just repressed it. Look, I've never been with another man... you know, sexually. And women. I mean... I... love women. But when it came to the... intimacy, I wasn't present. There was always something missing.

(another beat)

And throughout my childhood, with men, I think I had... you know... crushes. I didn't register them at the time, just "I wonder what Danny thinks of me..." or "I hope Paul will be there..."

And he cringes in embarrassment.

RICK (CONT'D)

This is, um, very difficult and embarrassing for me. But I also feel... what...

And he looks for the word and he finds it...

RICK (CONT'D)

... liberated.

And we pull back to be in...

MADELINE'S APARTMENT

Madeline holds a glass of wine and looks straight ahead wide-eyed. She's completely blown away.

A long moment of this until she says...

MADELINE

It all makes total sense.

RICK

You think?

MADELINE

Yes! I'm so happy for you.

RICK

Really?

MADELINE
Yes. And I feel...
(realizing this as she says
it)
... so much better about myself.

RICK
I'm not following.

MADELINE
It wasn't me.

Then...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
When you broke up with me, you
said "It's not you... it's me."
And that's always a load of
crap... but not with us.
Because... it really is you.

RICK
Right.

And she takes his hand.

MADELINE
This is amazing. Because you
know how crazy I am about you.
(beat)
We can be girlfriends!

RICK
Well, I wouldn't use the term
girl--

MADELINE
I'm going to be your fag hag,
Rick!

RICK
Okay.
(then)
What does that mean?

MADELINE
We can shop together.

RICK
Oh... okay.

MADELINE
And go to spas together.

RICK
I've never been to a spa.

MADELINE
And talk boys together.

RICK
Right...
(unsure)
Boys.

MADELINE
Rick, have you ever been with a
boy?

RICK
No.

MADELINE
Hmmm...

RICK
I don't really know much about
them... besides being one.

MADELINE
They can be very difficult.
They're very selfish.

RICK
That's not good.

MADELINE
And they're very gross sometimes.

RICK
Gross?

MADELINE
Hygiene wise.

Rick makes a face.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
And they're completely oblivious
emotionally. It's like there's a
big brick wall between their head
and their heart... they simply
can't express how they feel at
all.

RICK
Wow, that must be hard to deal
with.

MADELINE
Oh... and the penises. Don't
even get me started on the
penises.

RICK
The penises are bad?

MADELINE
The worst...
(then she smiles)
... and the best.

And she takes him into her hold, squeezes him tight and kisses his forehead...

MADELINE (CONT'D)
You'll see.

INT. BLAIR'S LOFT - DAY

An incredible space. Purchased taste meets cheesy bachelor. A Rothko hangs above a Pac Man machine. A Mary Rockford designed suede couch shares the floor with a tiger skin rug.

Our guys unwind... music plays.

NESBY
We started making out and then she started to cry.

Blair's sprawled out on the couch.

BLAIR
(to Wayne)
I thought she was supposed to cry after sex.

Throwing darts, Wayne shrugs.

WAYNE
That was before she met Nesby.

Looking over some papers, Nesby doesn't disagree.

And we find Rick... doing absolutely nothing but staring into space.

BLAIR
I'll give you Carson Palmer.

NESBY
No.

BLAIR
C'mon, Nesby, I need a runner.

NESBY
No.

Wayne looks over to Nesby.

WAYNE
So, what'd you do with her?

NESBY
I took her to the Landmark Diner.

BLAIR
No! You don't feed them -- the
food absorbs the drunk.
(then)
How about the Lions defense?

NESBY
No.

And Nesby turns to Wayne.

NESBY (CONT'D)
Explain to me why you're not on
your honeymoon again.

WAYNE
We decided to use the money to
buy a dining room set.

NESBY
We?

WAYNE
She.

Nesby nods.

BLAIR
(to Nesby)
How'd it end?

NESBY
I loaned her money for a cab.

BLAIR
Oh, that's just sad. I would've
made her walk.
(beat)
Can you believe this guy, Rick?

Rick's not paying attention, his mind a million miles away.

NESBY
(frustrated)
What am I supposed to do, Blair?

BLAIR
Stop being so nice!

NESBY

But that's who I am.

(beat)

And I'm going to meet someone who appreciates me for that.

Blair just regards Nesby with disdain for a long beat, then turns to Rick.

BLAIR

Rick, I need a runner. Give me Thomas Jones and I'll give you anyone on my roster.

Rick doesn't answer.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

Rick!

Rick turns to Blair with a blank stare.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

Name anyone.

RICK

I'm gay.

And everything stops. Wayne looks over. Blair's confused. Nesby doesn't even flinch.

NESBY

There is no I. M. Gay. There's a Francis Gay but he's not on Blair's team.

BLAIR

Rick, I don't own Francis Gay. How about Carson Palmer?

RICK

No. Not Francis Gay... I'm gay. I'm a gay person. Me. Rick.

They all just look at him...

BLAIR

I don't understand.

RICK

At Wayne's wedding I realized I was gay.

NESBY

Is this some kind of joke?

RICK

No.

And Blair stands there not comprehending this at all.

BLAIR
I'm confused.

RICK
I'm gay.

WAYNE
You're not gay.

RICK
I am, Wayne.

Completely befuddled...

BLAIR
I don't understand.

NESBY
What -- you like... kissed a guy
or something?

RICK
No.

WAYNE
Because you're not gay.

Still dazed...

BLAIR
I'm not following any of this.

NESBY
Then why would you--

RICK
Because I've been living a lie,
Nesby. Because it all became
clear. Because I've never really
enjoyed making love to women and
I've had crushes on men.

WAYNE
It's a phase.

RICK
It's not a phase.

NESBY
Crushes on who?

Desperate for comprehension...

BLAIR
Will someone please explain this
to me?

RICK
When that girder fell, it almost
killed me and everything became
very clear.

Waving it off...

WAYNE
Steel girders fall.

RICK
It was an epiphany.

WAYNE
It was the chicken.

Desperately trying get his mind around this...

BLAIR
Wait wait wait... Rick... you're
saying what? That you're some
sort of a fag?

NESBY
Don't use that word, Blair. It's
offensive to Rick.

WAYNE
It's not offensive to Rick
because Rick's not gay.

Nesby shoves Wayne.

NESBY
Don't yell at me -- I'm not the
one who's coming out of the
closet.

Wayne shoves Nesby back.

WAYNE
He's not in any closet because
he's not gay!

And Nesby charges Wayne and they spill over the couch.

Rick can only look to Blair who is still in a daze...

BLAIR
Rick... I don't understand.

And Rick just holds Blair's look for a moment... then goes.

INT. RICK'S APARTMENT - DAY

Rick heads into the two bedroom Upper West side apartment he shares with Nesby and turns on the lights.

He finds his Nesby sitting in the dark.

RICK
Hey.

NESBY
Where were you?

RICK
Walking. I can't figure out how to tell my parents.

NESBY
You might want to wait a bit... I mean, your dad's had a rough year.

Rick nods. A moment, then...

RICK
Why are you sitting in the dark?

NESBY
Because I'm anxious. And the light makes it worse.

As Rick has a seat next to him.

RICK
What are you anxious about, Nesby?

NESBY
Everything's changing. Wayne's married, you're... you know. I'm going to have another roommate.

RICK
Why?

NESBY
Because...

RICK
I don't want to move.

NESBY
You don't?

RICK
No.

NESBY

But you're... you know.

RICK

So. We can still live together.
It doesn't mean we're gay
together.

NESBY

What about if you bring a guy
back here?

RICK

I wouldn't worry about that yet.

Nesby nods. They sit in silence, until...

NESBY

When you said crushes... were any
of them... you know... on us?

RICK

No.

NESBY

Good. I mean, you know, we're
all friends, so...
(a beat, stumbling over his
words)
Not that it wouldn't be
flattering, it's just...

RICK

Don't worry about it.

NESBY

Right.

And once again, they sit there... staring straight ahead...

NESBY (CONT'D)

So, you've never actually--

RICK

No.

NESBY

But you think you want to?

RICK

Yeah, Nesby. I need to. To know
for sure. And I want to.
(then)
I mean, I think I've always
wanted to.

After a moment...

NESBY
They have more sex. Gays.

RICK
Do they?

NESBY
There've been studies.

Rick nods... hmmm....

NESBY (CONT'D)
Imagine it. Dating a guy.

RICK
Yeah.

NESBY
No crazy mood swings... or
illogical fits of anger...

RICK
No getting yelled at for leaving
the seat up...

NESBY
No risk of pregnancy...

RICK
No dealing with that time of the
month...

And they sit in silence, until Nesby turns to Rick with...

NESBY
Take me with you.

INT. WAYNE AND DIANNA'S APARTMENT/BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wayne and Dianna lie next to each other.

DIANNA
It kind of makes sense.

WAYNE
No, it doesn't. It makes no
sense at all. He's not gay.

DIANNA
He could be gay.

WAYNE
No... he couldn't. It's just a
phase for him... like spinning.

And she turns to him.

DIANNA

Baby, we gotta talk about your career.

WAYNE

I told you I'm not giving it up.

DIANNA

It's a dying field.

Beginning to get upset...

WAYNE

I'm a jingleman. My father was a jingleman. His father was a jingleman.

DIANNA

It was a different time. Commercials were new. People were more innocent, jingles were interesting to them.

(beat)

Now, we're desensitized to them.

WAYNE

Do you have any idea how much mail my father got after the Empire Carpet ad ran. That jingle changed their lives.

DIANNA

It was just a phone number.

And Wayne jumps out of the bed... incensed.

WAYNE

How could you say that? It was so much more than that!

DIANNA

"588-2300." What's so special about that?

WAYNE

The fact that you remember the number!

Shrugging...

DIANNA

People store numbers in their phones now.

WAYNE

Well, I'm not shaving my goatee!

DIANNA
I didn't say anything about
shaving your goatee.

WAYNE
You were about to.

And she sighs... because he was right.

INT. BROOKFIELD DERIVATIVES/TRADING DESK - MORNING

This is where Rick works with Blair.

It's a massive space that consists of this one incredibly long desk where the traders all work their phones and computers. A digital wall of ever changing numbers sits in front of the desk.

The place is frenetic, chaotic and masculine. All the traders are men... even the women.

The whole scene is guys shouting to each other while juggling the phones and computers.

BLAIR
Need a fill on that spider
straddle, people!

Phone on ear, Rick shouts out...

RICK
I have it filled at nine, three,
four.

Blair ignores Rick. Another trader fills the order. Rick gets up and marches over to Blair.

RICK (CONT'D)
That was the third order of mine
you haven't filled! What is
going on?

BLAIR
Get back to your desk.

RICK
What? You're mad at me.

BLAIR
(under his breath)
I thought we were friends.

RICK
We are.

BLAIR

So what -- like when you're
sleeping with a chick, you're
pretending it's a guy's butt?

Overhearing that, KYLE, a nearby trader, looks over. Blair
immediately shouts at him.

BLAIR (CONT'D)

Keep on your eye on those
November wheat futures, Kyle!

The trader immediately looks away.

RICK

It doesn't work like that.

BLAIR

What about the porn I lent you?
We're you looking at the guys
more than the girls?

RICK

I never even watched it.

BLAIR

Then why did you borrow it?

RICK

Because I thought I was supposed
to. And I thought I was supposed
to go out and hit on women with
you and I thought I was supposed
to fall in love with them.

(a beat)

But it wasn't natural to me.
Something was wrong. Can't you
understand that?

Blair just shakes his head in disapproval.

BLAIR

No.

INT. BLAIR'S LOFT - NIGHT

Wayne, Nesby and Blair sit on the couch.

WAYNE

What if he hits on me?

NESBY

He's not gonna hit on you Wayne --
c'mon, you know Rick.

WAYNE

I thought I did.

BLAIR

Remember when we went camping in sixth grade and Rick wanted to share my sleeping bag with me... that was because he's gay.

NESBY

No, it was because Wayne threw Ricks sleeping bag in the lake, remember?

Blair nods... that's true.

WAYNE

What if he makes us watch Dancing with the Stars?

NESBY

Wayne, you're favorite show is The Singing Bee.

Wayne shrugs...

WAYNE

That show is awesome.

BLAIR

Remember when he cried at the end of Rudy... that was because he's gay.

NESBY

We all cried at the end of Rudy.

WAYNE

What if he gets a boyfriend and we don't like the guy?

NESBY

C'mon, we didn't like your wife at first and now we love her.

BLAIR

Remember when he told me I had nice eyes... that was because he's gay.

NESBY

I was the one who told you that.

Now mortified, Wayne turns to Blair with...

BLAIR

Oh my God... what if he turned Nesby gay--

And Nesby's had...

NESBY
Enough! Enough of the "remembers"
and the "what ifs?", alright!?

As he stands with conviction.

NESBY (CONT'D)
Think about Rick right now. He's
our friend and he needs us more
than ever.

(beat)
And I know if I were him -- if I
were confused and alone... the
one thing I could count on...
would be you two idiots and Rick.

And he looks them both down...

NESBY (CONT'D)
So I'm asking you -- what are we
gonna do to help him?

There's a silence, then...

WAYNE
Nesby's right.

And as they both look over to Blair...

CUT TO:

INT. RICK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rick sits alone. No music or tv. Silence. Until... the door
opens and he looks to see...

Wayne and Nesby standing in the doorway. Blair is not with
them.

NESBY
Hey.

Just seeing them makes Rick smile.

RICK
Hey.

And he waits for them to come in. But they don't.

RICK (CONT'D)
Are you guys going to come in?

NESBY
Actually...

WAYNE
... we want to take you
somewhere.

Off Rick's confused reaction...

EXT. CHELSEA/ROD'S DANCE HALL - NIGHT

As the guys stand outside of this gay nightclub.

RICK
What are you guys doing?

WAYNE
Supporting you.

Rick vacantly nods as he watches two extremely BUFF MEN dressed in identical magenta wife beaters and tight pants head into the club...

NESBY
You need to know for sure, right?

As Rick swallows down some courage...

RICK
Right.

INT. ROD'S DANCE HALL - NIGHT

Thumping techno, flashing neon and men. All sorts of gay men. Bears, queens, clean cuts, gym rats, leather men, club kids and on.

Nesby, Wayne and Rick stand at the bar... nursing their beers and hiding their fears.

A CLEAN CUT slides by Wayne to get a drink.

CLEAN CUT
Excuse me.

Moving out of the way...

WAYNE
Sorry.

CLEAN CUT
(with a wink)
Love the traditional.

WAYNE
What?

CLEAN CUT

Your goatee. It's a traditional.
Nobody wears traditionals
anymore... everyone's doing the
imperial but the traditional is
so much hotter.

And Wayne looks around to see many of the guys have imperial
goatees (shaved under the nose but not under the mouth)

A guy catches him staring and gives him a wink.

WAYNE

I'll be back in ten minutes.

And Wayne bolts out of there. Rick turns to Nesby.

RICK

So, Blair isn't talking to me.

NESBY

I know. He's kind of messed up
over this.

Suddenly, Nesby get bumped from behind.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I'm sorry.

And he turns to be face to face with an adorable girl in her
twenties named...

AMY

I love this song.

NESBY

(never heard it before)
Me too.

As she grabs his hand and leads him to the dance floor...

AMY

Let's go!

... leaving Rick alone.

And he takes a long moment. Looks around the place. Sees men
dancing with other men... flirting with other men... kissing
other men.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Rick?

He turns to see someone he knows.

RICK

Nate?

Nate is a very good looking, athletic man wearing a baseball hat and an old t-shirt.

RICK (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

NATE
Having a drink.

RICK
No. I mean... I didn't--

NATE
Know I was gay?

RICK
Yes.

NATE
I am. Completely closet free as of four years ago. Why weren't you on the team this year?

RICK
I hurt my knee... and I've been working late a lot.

NATE
We could've used your outside shot.

RICK
That bad?

NATE
You didn't hear -- we lost six straight.

And after a beat of silence.

NATE (CONT'D)
So Rick -- what are you doing here?

DANCE FLOOR

As Nesby dances with Amy. They talk loudly over the music.

AMY
Almost all my friends are gay.

NESBY
That's so cool.

AMY
Yeah... women can be so catty and all men want to do is have sex--

NESBY
Right, right.

AMY
So this place is perfect. When I
go to regular bars I get hit on
constantly.

NESBY
That's the worst.

AMY
Right?

And as she dances close up on him.

AMY (CONT'D)
All I want to do is dance.

A little breathless...

NESBY
Me too.

AMY
Who are you here with?

Nate points to Rick, who is at the bar talking to Nate.

NESBY
My roommate.

AMY
Who's he talking to?

NESBY
I don't know.

AMY
So, you're not the jealous type?

NESBY
No.

AMY
You seem like such a nice guy.

NESBY
I am.

Now completely rubbing up against him...

AMY
I love it.

AT THE BAR

Rick finishes telling Nate his whole experience.

NATE
You've never even kissed a guy?

RICK
No.

They share a look.

RICK (CONT'D)
What?

NATE
Nothing. It's just... well, I
knew when I was ten.

A little black man with a massive blond afro overhears them and joins their conversation. He's a total queen named MANNY.

MANNY
And I was out when I was ten.

RICK
Isn't it different for everybody?

MANNY
Well, we can do a little test.

Manny shares a looks with Nate.

RICK
Okay.

MANNY
The Notebook or The Departed?

RICK
The Departed.

MANNY
Okay-- Spring Awakening or Spring
training?

RICK
Spring training.

MANNY
Fabulous or awesome?

RICK
Awesome.

Manny pats Nate on the back...

MANNY
He's all yours...

... and goes.

RICK
What?

NATE
Nothing. He's messing around...
It doesn't mean anything.
(then)
Excuse me for a second.

Nate heads off... leaving Rick alone again.

And Rick sees someone... looking out of place...

BLAIR
So this is your new spot?

RICK
I guess so.

BLAIR
You do know it's filled with
fags?

Rick smiles.

RICK
I hadn't noticed.

BLAIR
Wayne told me you guys would be
here.

Rick nods.

BLAIR (CONT'D)
Can we talk?

Before Rick can answer... Nesby joins them, holding up Amy's
phone number.

NESBY
I'm in love.

RICK
Really?

NESBY
Yes. And she loves me for me.
Because I'm nice and decent.

BLAIR
Wow. You win, Nesby.

NESBY
She thinks I'm gay.

BLAIR
You lose, Nesby.

And Wayne now joins them.

NESBY
Where'd you go?

WAYNE
Rite Aid.

Rick regards Wayne.

RICK
Something's different about you.
Were you wearing a jacket?

Wayne just shrugs... but we notice... he shaved his goatee.

EXT. ROD'S DANCE HALL - NIGHT

As the guys scarf down hot dogs from a street vendor.

BLAIR
So, I thought about this... a
lot. And here's the thing.
(beat)
When I got drunk in Vegas and
ended up married to that
stripper. You found that really
rare immigration law that saved
my ass.

RICK
It was nothing.

BLAIR
No. It was something. You had
my back.

NESBY
You're right, Blair.
(beat)
I remember when I couldn't get a
date for prom, Rick and Kelly let
me come with them. It meant a
lot.

WAYNE
That's right. He went to prom
with Kelly Morris. She was
smokin'.

NESBY

I know.
(frustrated)
The gay guys get all the hot
girls.

WAYNE

When I was thinking about backing
out of the marriage, you set me
straight.

BLAIR

I guess what we're trying to say
is... none of us are perfect.

NESBY

I can't meet a woman to save my
life.

WAYNE

I have no idea how to be married.

BLAIR

And I've got three friends with
some serious issues.

Wayne steps forward.

WAYNE

What matters is we have each
other's back.

NESBY

We always have.

BLAIR

No matter what.

And Blair shares a look with Wayne and Nesby then turns to Rick
with...

BLAIR (CONT'D)

And even though this is totally
messed up... we got yours, Rick.

As Rick slowly nods... taking that in...

RICK

Let's get out of here.

And they set to go... but from outside of the club...

NATE

Rick! Where you going?

And Rick looks to Nate then back to his friends... Wayne nods
"Go!"

RICK
So... I'll catch you guys later?

And as they watch Rick crosses the street to greet Nate.

BLAIR
(re Nate)
Is that guy a fag?

WAYNE
You can't use that word anymore,
Blair.

BLAIR
Sorry.
(then)
Is that guy a homo?

AND RICK AND NATE

Stand at the front of the club.

RICK
I thought you bolted because I
wasn't gay enough or something.

NATE
No. I had to say goodbye to
someone.
(then)
Look, Rick -- none of that means
you're not gay, it doesn't mean
anything.

AND THE GUYS

Eat their hot dogs across the street and look on.

NESBY
This is going to be fine.

BLAIR
Yeah. I mean nothing's changed.
So big deal -- Rick's gay.

WAYNE
It's just a word.

AND RICK AND NATE

Still at the front of the club. Rick shakes his head in
frustration...

RICK
It's so confusing. It's just...
this steel girder fell and
everything changed and...

And he's near tears... very emotional...

RICK (CONT'D)
I couldn't tell my parents and my
friends are all confused...

Nate moves to him...

NATE
Shh...

RICK
... and my ex girlfriend is
strangely really happy about
it...

Nate brings Rick into his hold... hugs him.

NATE
It's going to be okay...

RICK
But I chose spring training and I
say awesome... and...

And Rick looks up to find himself in Nate's arms.

RICK (CONT'D)
I want to watch The Departed.

And they look into each other's eyes... a long moment...
heavy... as their faces move closer...

And Rick and Nate kiss.

AND THE GUYS

All react.

Wayne -- sharply looking away as if he just stared right into
the sun...

WAYNE
Oh God! Why?!

Nesby -- stepping forward to get a better look.

NESBY
Was there tongue? Did you guys
see tongue?

Blair -- regarding his hot dog in disgust then throwing it down.

BLAIR
I can't eat this.

AND RICK AND NATE

Break the kiss and step back.

Nate heads back in the club then turns to Rick...

NATE

You coming in?

Rick turns to see the guys across the street. They immediately throw on fake smiles and wave as if nothing happened.

Rick looks back at Nate then back at the guys.

And he takes a moment, then...

RICK

Yeah.

And as Rick heads back into the club with Nate, we...

FADE OUT.