

Samuel French Acting Edition

The View UpStairs

by Max Vernon

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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THE VIEW UPSTAIRS premiered at the Lynn Redgrave Theatre on 45 Bleecker St., New York, New York, produced by Invisible Wall Productions. This production played 105 performances. The cast was as follows:

WES Jeremy Pope
PATRICK Taylor Frey
BUDDY Randy Redd
WILLIE Nathan Lee Graham
HENRI Frenchie Davis
FREDDY Michael Longoria
INEZ / REALTOR Nancy Ticotin
RICHARD Benjamin Howes
DALE Ben Mayne
COP Richard E. Waits
SWINGS Anthony Alfaro, April Ortiz

THE VIEW UPSTAIRS was developed with support from NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program, Rhinebeck Writer's Retreat, and New York Stage and Film.

CHARACTERS

- WES** – (mid/late twenties) Up-and-coming fashion designer. Has a following.
- PATRICK** – (early twenties) Young, runaway hustler. Sex, magic, whimsy, bell-bottoms.
- BUDDY** – (fifties) Resident pianist. Elton John-coulda-been. Married.
- WILLIE** – (forties-to-sixties, Black) Might know all the secrets of the universe, might be in the early stages of dementia.
- HENRI** – (thirties/forties) Bartender. Tough as nails, no-nonsense, old-school butch lesbian.
- FREDDY** – (twenties/thirties, Latino) Construction worker by day, drag queen Aurora Whorealis by night.
- INEZ / REALTOR** – (late-forties-to-sixties, Latina) Freddy's mother, makeup consultant, and cheerleader. As Realtor – the human equivalent of an uplifting pharmaceutical commercial with horrible side effects.
- RICHARD** – (forties) Priest of the Metropolitan Community Church. It is possible to have the character of Richard played by a woman, in which case use the name Rita Mae.
- DALE** – (thirties/forties) Hustler, homeless, hungry for acceptance. Means well. Burns down The UpStairs Lounge.
- COP** – (thirties/forties) Seventies Cop is corrupt, homophobic, violent. Present-day Cop is just a guy doing his job, with awk-but-nice dad vibes.
- ENSEMBLE / CHORUS** – *Optional* Other patrons in the bar who round out the community.

SETTING

The UpStairs Lounge, a gay bar in New Orleans, LA.

TIME

The show starts and ends in the present day; the rest takes place back in 1973.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

A slash (/) indicates overlapping dialogue. Generally speaking, it's a bar and people aren't waiting for their turn to talk.

Generally, Wes speaks at a faster quip than the other patrons in 1973.

Wes is someone whose point of view shifts rapidly, to the extent of almost seeming ridiculous at times. Within a couple sentences he can lurch from jubilation to depression, fury, arousal, comedy, and back. For much of the show he is more personality than person, which gradually gets stripped away, but is something he can snap back into on a dime. He is allowed/meant to be funny, and the actor playing him can enjoy how horrible he is.

I think each character in the show is the star, in their own minds if nothing else. So – actors should take risks, make big, bold choices, and assert their presence in the room in their own unique ways.

It's the seventies, pre-AIDS, and all homosexual activity is illegal. We need to feel both the tension and release of that. Most modern audiences don't know/remember what real cruising and sexual exploration felt like, so remind them!

While it's important to carve out true emotional beats for the characters, never let the piece veer into melodrama. For example, Patrick has theoretically been dead for forty years by the time he tells Wes about the fire at the end of the show, so he's had time to process in a way Wes has not; the Cop at the end hears/sees horrible things every day, so learning about the fire in an abstract way isn't going to make him start crying, but he might respond to Wes' vulnerability in a human way.

Please find a way through costume/hair/makeup to make it clear that the cops in the past and present are different people, even though they are played by the same actor.

In the script, Wes' leather jacket with yellow neon flowers is referenced – a design by our original costume designer, Anita Yavich. Whatever subsequent designers come up with for Wes' hipster-fashionista attire, please have Patrick reference that instead.

For the ending monologue, at some point in the future the politics might need to be updated re: Vice President, KKK, etc. If there's an easy substitution, go ahead and make it. If more complicated, please get in touch and I can work with you to find a solution.

While there is no specific ethnicity indicated for Wes or Patrick, I **strongly** encourage theaters to employ diverse casting and not end up with two white leads. I think the love story between these two characters is more powerful with heightened contrasts; they are meant to yin-yang

each other in energy/physicality/vocal tone/appearance, rather than being generational parallels. Also, chemistry between these two actors is important!

Because *The View UpStairs* is about gay history and community, I think working with queer-identified performers is valuable to the authenticity and artistic viability of the show. If that isn't available in your community and you've got a talented actor who is game to play and serving rough trade realness, go for it.

There is a good deal of action that can take place in the bar that is not indicated on the page. The bar should feel like a vibrant, high-energy, dangerous, exciting place to be, and we should get the impression that there are other unspoken stories and narratives occurring throughout the night. When characters are not in a scene, they're still living their lives – cruising, drinking, dancing, etc. I leave it at the discretion of the director to build these moments in, especially in the case of a “pre-show” before Buddy starts to sing.

Buddy can/should play light piano underscoring whenever it's useful. Band should rock the f*ck out. Singing > singing. Get that Rodgers & Hammerstein vibrato outta here!

The View UpStairs was originally performed in an intimate, immersive setting, casting the audience as patrons in the bar when they walked into the theater. This allowed for actors to ad-lib with audiences in a way that was often hilarious, and also made the fire sequence more immediate and terrifying. While it's possible to do the show in a proscenium, I think a semi-immersive or fully-immersive staging is a better fit for the material.

The UpStairs Lounge was “home” for many of the patrons who went there. I think it's important to find ways for the actors, creative team, and crew to feel at home in the set. For our first production, everyone brought in their favorite kitschy knick-knacks and we hid them like Easter eggs throughout the room.

Willie's grand monologue holds up the action of the show for no reason other than to be f*cking fabulous. For it to justify its existence, it has to be EVERYTHING. Scene-stealing. Insane, physical comedy, high drama, camp. Epic. It needs to feel like we're going to gay church and this is the sermon, even more so than the actual sermon. The “that's all” should only be added in if the audience is gagging, in which case the actor should throw his hands up, take a bow, and bask. Otherwise, get on with it.

For Freddy's drag show, if you ain't got a cone bra that can shoot confetti, just do something similarly fun at the climax.

Some of you might have heard Patrick's song "And I Wish" from our cast album. We cut it from the original run because after the fire, having another ballad so late in the show was killing the forward motion of the piece. Please do not attempt to restore the song without permission from the author.

Finally, many of these characters are composites of real people who frequented the UpStairs, but out of respect and creative license I've changed names and certain details. It's super important, however, that audiences be given some kind of sheet with the hard facts of the UpStairs Lounge fire and names of those who died. I would prefer this be given out after the show rather than before so that audiences don't go into the experience anticipating tragedy.

[MUSIC NO. 0 "DEAD CENTER"]

[MUSIC NO. 0A "I WAS MEANT FOR MORE"]

[MUSIC NO. 0B "THEME SONG"]

[MUSIC NO. 01 "SOME KIND OF PARADISE"]

*(1973. The UpStairs Lounge, a New Orleans gay bar with eclectic décor at once elegant and extremely tacky. The atmosphere is a bit seedy, men in various states of intoxication cruise each other, dance, commiserate, laugh, etc. For most of the patrons, this is home. After a while, **BUDDY**, the resident pianist, heads over to the piano and sits down to play. He flirts back with the men cat-calling him, takes a shot of whiskey, and sings.)*

BUDDY.

IN THE SUMMERTIME HEAT
DOWN ON IBERVILLE STREET,
SEX AND INCENSE MIXED IN THE AIR.
MET A MAN WHO SHOOK MY BONES
WITH ONE PENETRATING STARE.
HE SAID, "NO REASON TO FEAR,
BOY, YOUR MAMA AIN'T HERE -
COME HOME WITH ME INSTEAD."
AND IT WAS HEAVEN ON A LOAN.
WOKE UP IN A STRANGER'S BED
AND I SAID:

I THINK I FOUND SOME KIND OF PARADISE -
NO ANGEL WINGS OR FAIRY DUST,
JUST THE RUSH OF LUST,

BUDDY, INEZ, FREDDY, WILLIE, PATRICK, HENRY, RICHARD & DALE.
BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT.

BUDDY.

AND THOUGH THIS PLACE IS FAR FROM HEAVENLY -
 NO GOLDEN THRONE, THE ECSTASY'S
 JUST TEMPORARY,

BUDDY, INEZ, FREDDY, WILLIE, PATRICK, HENRY, RICHARD & DALE.

BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT.

BUDDY.

I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE THEN
 BUT I'D BEEN BORN AGAIN:
 THE WORLD WAS DANGEROUS AND NEW.
 I CHOSE A FAMILY OF MY OWN
 WHO SHARED MY BRAND NEW POINT OF VIEW.
 NOW YOU'RE

BUDDY & WILLIE.

ALL GATHERED 'ROUND
 IN THIS KINGDOM WE'VE FOUND
 WHERE THE QUEENS AND CLONES COLLIDE.

BUDDY.

AND THOUGH IT REEKS OF CHEAP COLOGNE,
 IT'S MY FAV'RITE ESCAPE FROM THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

BUDDY & PATRICK.

I THINK I FOUND SOME
 KIND OF PARADISE -
 NO ANGEL WINGS OR
 FAIRY DUST,
 JUST THE RUSH OF LUST,
 BUT IT'S ALL RIGHT.
 AND THOUGH THIS
 PLACE IS FAR FROM
 HEAVENLY -
 NO GOLDEN THRONE, THE
 ECSTASY'S
 JUST TEMPORARY, BUT IT'S
 ALL RIGHT.
 ALL RIGHT. IT'S ALL
 RIGHT.
 IT'S ALL RIGHT

HENRY.

I THINK I FOUND SOME
 KIND OF PARADISE -
 ANGEL WINGS
 ONLY THE RUSH OF LUST,
 ALL RIGHT.
 AND THOUGH THIS
 PLACE IS FAR FROM
 HEAVENLY -
 GOLDEN THRONE
 ALL RIGHT

HENRY.

I THINK I FOUND
I THINK I FOUND
SOME KIND OF
SOME KIND OF

BUDDY & PATRICK.

ALL RIGHT!
I THINK I FOUND SOME

KIND OF PARADISE

NO FAIRY DUST
THE RUSH OF LUST
IT'S ALL RIGHT
AND THOUGH THIS
PLACE IS FAR FROM
HEAVENLY

NO GOLDEN THRONE

THE ECSTASY'S JUST
TEMPORARY, BUT IT'S
ALL RIGHT

I THINK I FOUND,
I THINK I FOUND
I THINK I FOUND SOME
KIND OF

INEZ.

ALL RIGHT!
I THINK I FOUND SOME
KIND OF PARADISE
NO ANGEL WINGS
NO FAIRY DUST,
RUSH OF LUST.
ALL RIGHT!

AND THOUGH THIS PLACE
IS FAR FROM

HEAVENLY

GOLDEN THRONE
ONLY TEMPORARY BUT
IT'S ALL RIGHT!

ALL RIGHT!
I THINK I FOUND,
I THINK I FOUND
I THINK I FOUND SOME
KIND OF

(The songs ends and the patrons applaud.)

[MUSIC NO. 01A "PARADISE PLAYOFF"]

(The lighting shifts as WES, a blasé hipster from 2017, enters the room. He is accompanied by a REALTOR. Both carry flashlights, which they shine on the walls and ceiling. 1973 and 2017 continue to co-exist without being

aware of each other. WES notices burn marks on the wall, with growing outrage.)

WES. What the hell happened to this place?

REALTOR. Oh.

(The REALTOR giggles, trying to mitigate the damage.)

A tiny fire. Nothing to worry about.

WES. The photos you sent look nothing like this! I've already spent a small fortune –

REALTOR. So – you'll go to Bed Bath & Beyond and get some new curtains –

(WES starts panicking.)

WES. This is a disaster. I can't un-send the press release.

REALTOR. Why would you?! Front page of the *Times-Picayune*?

(The REALTOR gestures dramatically.)

“Trendsetter or Troublemaker? A Prodigal Son Returns.”

(WES buries his face in his hands, makes tragic noises.)

And this location? The French Quarter for your first flagship?

(WES reconsiders.)

WES. I *had* to get out of New York; so manufactured, so five years ago.

REALTOR. You're an influencer, a *force* –

WES. Hellooo! Why sell couture out of a utility closet in Bushwick, when N'awlins is vibrant –

REALTOR. Edgy!

WES. Soulful.

REALTOR. Rustic!

(WES shines the flashlight around, sees more damage, feigns excitement/jazz hands.)

WES. *Yaaaaas!* No. I just want my deposit back.

REALTOR. Maybe we can do a little better – five percent off the listing price?

WES. Did you not see what the Beyhive did to Rachael Ray on Twitter?? My followers will destroy you on Yelp. Not to mention my team of lawyers. Thirty.

REALTOR. This building is already way undervalued.

WES. And how long has it been on the market? Should we Google?

(WES takes out his phone menacingly. The REALTOR changes tactics.)

REALTOR. Look – if you want to change your mind I understand. A building like this requires vision – only someone *overflowing* with creativity and style –

WES. And you think I'm not??

(The REALTOR shrugs, feigning ignorance. She knows she has him.)

Okay fine. Give me the keys!

(The REALTOR's demeanor immediately turns bubbly.)

REALTOR. Great.

(The REALTOR digs out the contract. She speaks lightning fast, as if listing medication side effects.)

I just need your signature saying you've seen the property in its current state, we're not responsible for any injuries which might occur – falling beams, head trauma, asbestos, toxic mold, yada yada. And then we'll be good to go.

(WES signs.)

It's been a pleasure meeting you Wes. I wish you the greatest success.

(The REALTOR hands WES the keys.)

WES. Thanks. Byeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee.

(The REALTOR bolts for the exit.)

[MUSIC NO. 02 "#HOUSEHOLDNAME"]

WES. Oh my god... What have I done?

(Throughout this song, WES continues to explore the space, having unintentional encounters with the past – a patron dances on a chair, WES takes a photo of its charred remains, someone sets down a beer mug on the bar, WES jumps off of it, etc. There is fun and ethereal beauty to be mined from the two eras not seeing each other.)

I HAVE A VOICE THAT TALKS TO ME IN MY HEAD
SOMETIMES

THAT SAYS "WHY NOT DO SOMETHING EXTREME –
SHAVE YOUR EYEBROWS OFF, MAYBE BUY A BUILDING."
AND THIS VOICE THAT TALKS TO ME IN MY HEAD
SOMETIMES

SAID "THAT'S FUCKIN' BRILLIANT, BUY A BUILDING!"
SO I BOUGHT A BUILDING...

WHERE THE MOLDY WOOD IS A DOG SHIT BROWN
AND EVERYTHING HAS TO BE TORN DOWN
AND PLASTERED OVER DESP'RATELY
THERE'S NO PLUMBING, NO WI-FI, NO FIRE ESCAPE,
JUST AN ANCIENT DAMAGED VELVET DRAPE
THAT'S OLDER THAN ME.
YOU CAN CALL ME DELUSIONAL

BUT I'VE KNOWN SINCE I WAS EIGHTEEN
THAT I WOULD ONE DAY BE THE FACE
OF EVERY MAJOR MAGAZINE
I DON'T NEED COMMUNITY
I DON'T HAVE TO BELONG
MY FORTY THOUSAND FOLLOWERS
ON INSTAGRAM JUST CAN'T BE WRONG

(WES pulls out a tiny vial of cocaine from his pocket and snorts a bump off his hand.)

I AM TOUCHED BY FATE
TO HELL WITH THE PAST, MY FUTURE'S GREAT

IT ALL STARTS TODAY: I'LL BE A
HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME

(WES takes a series of selfies, rapidly changing poses.)

I HAVE A THERAPIST WHO TALKS TO ME SOMETIMES:
"THE VOID YOU FEEL CANNOT BE FILLED UP
WITH RESTYLANE, OR BUYIN' A BUILDING."
AND THE THERAPIST WHO TALKS TO ME SOMETIMES
ASKED "DO YOU FIND YOUR LIFE FULFILLING?"

*(WES rubs the cocaine on his gums, then
plasters on a smile.)*

SO I BOUGHT A BUILDING!

AND IT'S NOT THE LAP OF LUXURY
BUT A STEPPING STONE TO THE FANTASY
OF PARIS COUTURE FASHION WEEK
IF YOU SQUINT ENOUGH IT'S ALMOST QUAIN'T
IT JUST NEEDS A HUNDRED COATS OF PAINT
IN ORDER TO LOOK LESS...BLEAK.

AND THE REST IS HISTORY
I'LL LAUNCH LIKE A CANNONBALL
I'LL MAKE A MILLION DOLLARS
AND I'LL PROVE ONCE AND FOR ALL
THAT I'M NOT JUST A "BASIC BITCH,
ANOTHER WANNABE NOUVEAU RICHE,
TIPPING TOWARD A BREAKDOWN"
WITH MY EIGHTY THOUSAND FOLLOWERS
ON PINTEREST: WHO'S LAUGHING NOW??

(WES takes another selfie.)

I AM TOUCHED BY FATE
TO HELL WITH THE PAST, MY FUTURE'S GREAT
IT ALL STARTS TODAY: I'LL BE A
HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME
A HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME, A
HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME
A HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME, I'LL BE A
HASHTAGHOUSEHOLDNAME.

(**WES** hears a very faint, far-away echo of a waltz being played by **BUDDY**.)

[MUSIC NO. 02A "WALTZ ECHO"]

(**WES** cautiously walks over to the piano. Was it just his imagination? He shakes it off and notices the tattered, destroyed curtains sadly clinging to the windows.)

WES. Hello ugly curtain. Soon everything in here will be covered in black patent leather and everyone will love me, and you'll be in a garbage dump. Aren't you excited?! Yeah? Okay let's go!

(**WES** squeals with delight as he rips the curtain off the wall. Light streams in, and suddenly the **PATRONS** in 1973 become aware of **WES**.)

HENRI. HEY! GET THE FUCK OFF MY CURTAIN!

(**WES** screams. Some of the **PATRONS** scream back.)

FREDDY. Are we being raided?

HENRI. Are you a cop?

WES. No!

(**BUDDY** observes **WES**' extremely tight pants.)

BUDDY. Are you a figure skater?

FREDDY. (Excited.) Where you from?

WES. New York.

HENRI. Shake him down!

(**FREDDY** and **WILLIE** start searching **WES**' pockets. **FREDDY** pulls out **WES**' iPhone and holds it up curiously.)

FREDDY. What is this??

(Presses a button. **FREDDY** gasps.)

Oh my god it just lit up!

WILLIE. Quick Freddy! Give it here.

(WILLIE throws the phone on the floor and smashes it under the heel of his boot. WES screams in horror.)

WES. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!!

(WES picks up the pieces of his phone and looks at them in disbelief, distraught.)

WILLIE. Destroying your surveillance technology! I'll have you know I was once interrogated in the Kremlin for thirty-eight days straight. And did I reveal any secrets? NEVER.

RICHARD. Son, you're here for the church service, right?

WES. *(Panic.)* Okay. I think my cocaine was laced with bath salts and now I'm tripping BALLS; is there a bathroom? I need –

(WES pantomimes splashing water on his face.)

Water!

HENRI. I'm afraid we can't let you in there 'til we know you're safe.

WES. What do you want?

RICHARD. A few more questions: Oscar Wilde? Or Arthur Miller?

WES. Um. Wilde?

WILLIE. Sonny...or Cher?

WES. Cher!

(RICHARD calls out to the room:)

RICHARD. He's safe!

(Everyone breathes a sigh of relief. To WES:)

Bathroom's that way.

(RICHARD points to the bathroom. WES runs in.)

[MUSIC NO. 02B "BUDDY'S LITE UNDERSCORE"]

(BUDDY starts to lightly play piano again as life in the bar returns to normal.)

HENRI. Lord. I need to sell this bar and move somewhere far, far away.

BUDDY. Oh Henri. You know you couldn't live without –

HENRI. Without what? Having to watch a bunch of demented nellie queens getting drunk all day? Breaking up fights every Sunday Beer Bust, bribing cops from coming in here and bashing all your pretty faces?

FREDDY. What about Diana Ross night?

(WILLIE drapes the velvet curtain around himself like a dress.)

WILLIE.

TOUCH ME IN THE MORNING.

HENRY. Especially not Diana Ross night! And don't even get me started on –

(Suddenly, we hear WES scream from the bathroom. He runs out, followed by DALE.)

WES. This person just sexually harassed me!

HENRI. Dale you know the rules. I told you last time if I caught you hustling I'd have / to throw you out.

DALE. I wasn't hustling –

WES. You said you'd suck my dick for five dollars!

BUDDY. Five dollars? Dale, are you having a discount?

WILLIE. What do you expect? With this Nixon economy –

WES. Nixon?? What year is it?

(Beat. HENRI sighs.)

HENRI. 1973 / wiseass.

WES. 1973?!

DALE. See Henri? The guy's crazy. You can't trust a word he says.

WES. At least my face ain't serving third-generation trailer park realness.

(WES snaps.)

DALE. Huh?

WES. The library's open!

(WES makes a performance of putting on a pair of sunglasses.)

In your experience, what receded first? Your dreams or your hairline?

(DALE touches his hair, confused.)

Did you ever think of becoming a janitor? Because you're great at clearing a room.

(People in the bar start laughing, whistling.)

It's too bad they destroyed my phone because there's an app on it I'd love to show you. It makes you look ugly. It's called camera.

(Some patrons laugh and applaud, DALE lunges at WES. He is restrained by the other patrons. HENRI to DALE:)

HENRI. Hey! That's strike two. Pull yourself together.

(DALE skulks off. WILLIE triumphantly drapes his arm around WES.)

WILLIE. *(Ecstatic.)* OH. I love New Yorkers! They're so bitchy. Henri! One shot for the newbie.

BUDDY. And bring me a beer while you're at it.

HENRI. Why don't you get it yourself, Mary?

(BUDDY gives a knowing look to the other guys, then struts over to her.)

BUDDY. Henri. Can I get a kiss?

(BUDDY points to his cheek, makes smooching noises.)

HENRI. I'm gonna hit you. Maybe it'll feel like one.

BUDDY. Come on Henri...etta!

(BUDDY grabs the drinks as HENRI throws a glass of water at him. He moves out of the way just in time and laughs triumphantly.)

HENRI *growls in disgust, then goes to grab the mop. BUDDY hands WES the shot.*)

BUDDY. Drink up.

WES. What's that for?

WILLIE. *(Innocently.)* A rite of passage.

BUDDY. A little bathtub hooch'll put some hair on your chest.

WES. No – I lasered it off. It's gone forever.

BUDDY. Live a little.

(BUDDY clinks his shot glass with WES', then downs it nonchalantly, like drinking water. WES eyes his shot suspiciously, then tries to shoot it back. A wave of shock ripples through WES. It burns like hellfire. He makes the noise of a dying cat, coughing. BUDDY slaps his back and laughs.)

Rumor has it Henri soaks the booze in an old boot Willie stole from some trick back in the fifties. Gives it that special flavor.

WILLIE. *Fleet week.*

(We hear the loud buzz of the front door. HENRI sets aside her mop and goes down the stairs to let the person in.)

WES. What is this place anyway?

[MUSIC NO. 03 "LOST AND FOUND"]

BUDDY. *(Sensually, with grandeur.)* Only the shittiest low-rent flea-ridden dive on the lavender line. In other words, home.

(BUDDY grabs WES and drags him across the room.)

BUDDY.

WILLIE THE WISE, IS OUR RESIDENT SAGE
AND HE AIN'T SHY ON GIVING ADVICE.
HE'S THE BIGGEST DIVA TO COME FROM THE SOUTH

SINCE GOOD OL' LEONTYNE PRICE.
 NOW WILLIE MIGHT SEEM LIKE A SHADY-ASS QUEEN
 BUT HE'S REALLY GOT EVERYONE'S BACK.
 AND HE'S A DAY YOUNGER THAN JESUS,

WILLIE.

BUT YOU CAN'T TELL 'CAUSE BLACK DON'T CRACK.

WILLIE & FREDDY.

BLACK DON'T CRACK!

BUDDY. Amen!

NEED A SHOULDER TO CRY ON?
 SOME DRUGS TO GET HIGH ON?
 TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
 JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE LOST
 BUT NOW YOU'RE FOUND.

BUDDY, WILLIE & FREDDY.

YOU CAN FIND A NEW MOTHER
 A FRIEND, OR A LOVER
 STICK AROUND AND SEE!

BUDDY.

WILLIE & FREDDY.

JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU OOH
 WERE BOUND

BUDDY, WILLIE & FREDDY.

BUT NOW YOU'RE FREE.

(HENRI walks back up the stairs, with PATRICK trailing not far behind. WES and PATRICK lock eyes for a moment before PATRICK goes to sit by himself at the bar.)

WES. Who's that?

BUDDY. No one worth knowing...

FREDDY. Buddy, you're evil. I can't imagine what you say about me when I'm not around.

(FREDDY flutters his eyelashes.)

BUDDY.

FREDDY MOVED HERE FROM PUERTO RICO
 TO TASTE THE AMERICAN DREAM.
 HE'D SPEND HIS DAYS WORKING IN CONSTRUCTION

AND NIGHTS TRYING ON MOM'S MAYBELLINE.
IT WASN'T TOO LONG BEFORE HE GOT CAUGHT.
AND HIS FATHER CALLED HIM A DISGRACE.

FREDDY.

TO NOW MY MOM COMES TO EVERY SHOW!

BUDDY.

TO MAKE SURE HIS TITTIES STAY IN THEIR PLACE.

HENRI, RICHARD, WILLIE & FREDDY.

TO MAKE SURE THOSE TITTIES STAY.

BUDDY.

IF YOU DESIRE A STRANGER,
A LITTLE BIT OF DANGER -

BUDDY & WILLIE.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND.

FREDDY, HENRI & RICHARD.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND.

BUDDY.

JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE LOST

BUDDY, WILLIE, FREDDY & HENRI.

BUT NOW YOU'RE FOUND.

BUDDY.

YOU

BUDDY, WILLIE, FREDDY & HENRI.

CAN FIND A NEW MOTHER
A FRIEND, OR A LOVER
STICK AROUND AND SEE!

BUDDY.

WILLIE, FREDDY & HENRI.

JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU OOH
WERE BOUND

BUDDY, WILLIE, FREDDY & HENRI.

BUT NOW YOU'RE FREE.

HENRI. Hey! You forget about me?

BUDDY. You, Henri? Never. Shall I speak of your cheery disposition?

HENRI. Don't bother! I can speak for myself.

I BUILT THIS PLACE TO FINALLY HAVE A HOME

AND I WORK HARD TO CARE FOR IT
 I LOVE THIS WHOLE COMMUNITY
 EVEN THO YOU'RE ALL FULL OF SHIT.
 THE SECOND TROUBLE COMES A'KNOCKIN'
 ALL YOU FAIRIES'LL FLY OUTTA VIEW.
 BUT I DON'T RUN, I GOT A MEAN RIGHT HOOK
 AND MORE BALLS THAN ANY OF YOU!

WILLIE, FREDDY, RICHARD & (HENRI).

SHE'S (I'VE) GOT BALLS.

DALE. That's true!

WANNA GO ON A BENDER
 WITH A BULLDAGGER BARTENDER?

BUDDY, WILLIE, FREDDY, RICHARD & HENRI.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND.

WILLIE, FREDDY & RICHARD.

TAKE A LOOK AROUND.

BUDDY.

JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE LOST

BUDDY & HENRI.

BUT NOW YOU'RE FOUND.

BUDDY.

YOU WANT A GLORY HOLE TROLL
 OR TO

BUDDY, DALE, FREDDY, RICHARD & WILLIE.

SAVE YOUR SOUL?
 STICK AROUND AND SEE!

BUDDY.

JUST A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE
 BOUND

OTHERS.

OOH

BUDDY, WILLIE, FREDDY, RICHARD & HENRI.

BUT NOW YOU'RE FREE.

BUDDY.

THEN THERE'S ME, STUCK HERE
 PLAYIN' FOR TIPS
 BUT ONE DAY YOU'LL SEE ME ON
 JOHNNY CARSON, OUT AND
 PROUD,

OTHERS.

OOH

UNLIKE THAT CLOSET CASE ELTON JOHN.	CLOSET CASE ELTON JOHN.
I'VE GOT MORE TALENT THAN TEN OF THESE QUEENS COMBINED AND THE TRUTH IS I LOVE MY LIFE.	WAH
I'M AT PEACE WITH WHO I AM -	

WILLIE.

BUT YOU'VE NEVER TOLD *THAT* TO YOUR WIFE.

(Everyone laughs. BUDDY gives him some side-eye.)

NEED A SHOULDER TO CRY ON?
SOME DRUGS TO GET HIGH ON?
TAKE A LOOK AROUND.
A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE LOST
BUT NOW YOU'RE FOUND.

ALL.

YOU CAN FIND A NEW MOTHER
A FRIEND, OR A LOVER
STICK AROUND AND SEE!

BUDDY.

A MINUTE AGO YOU WERE BOUND
BUT NOW YOU'RE

ALL.

FREE.

FREDDY. Free to tell the world outside to kiss my -

(FREDDY leans out the window and moons the people walking by on the street. People in the bar, laugh, point, gasp, etc. HENRI snaps.)

HENRI. Get your fairy ass down from there!

DALE. Strike one!

FREDDY. Oh calm down. It's free advertising.

BUDDY. There ain't gonna be a show if the cops come.

(FREDDY rolls his eyes. A phone behind the bar rings. HENRI picks up - she code-switches to a more feminine tone.)

HENRI. UpStairs...

(HENRI switches back to butch.)

Freddy it's your mother. Again.

(FREDDY laughs apologetically and hurries to pick up the phone.)

FREDDY. ¿Dónde estás?

[MUSIC NO. 03A "BUDDY'S TERRIBLE PLAYOFF"]

You were supposed to be here an hour ago with my dress. Okay okay! I'm coming.

(FREDDY hangs up. While he's walking to the door, BUDDY goes back to the piano and begins playing some New Orleans jazz. The other men in the bar dance, drink, flirt, cruise, converse, etc. WES spots PATRICK again by the bar, who smiles at him. WES snaps his fingers at the bar and makes a big show of flashing his cash. HENRI walks over.)

WES. Here's a hundred. Let's have a round for everyone. Keep the change.

(This stops FREDDY in his tracks at the doorway. "A hundred?!?!")

HENRI. HEY! Everybody. Drinks on New York!

[MUSIC NO. 03B "BUDDY'S HAPPY SONG"]

(Everybody cheers, BUDDY plays a rollicking pop tune. Everyone gathers around WES in celebration. They admire him like a shiny new toy.)

FREDDY.

My hero!
Are you
single?

HENRI.

Finally
some
respectable
cliente!

(HENRI prepares drinks. RICHARD tells an audience member a secret.)

FREDDY.

My mom
would love
you.

(WILLIE crosses to WES.)

BUDDY.

Hey Dick,
bring me a
beer?

WILLIE.

If only
all the
children
could be so
respectful
of their
elders.

(RICHARD crosses to WES.)

RICHARD.

I knew
those
flyers'd
work.
All the
young
kids are at
the baths
these days.

FREDDY.

And that
bicep! /

Do you
work out?

WILLIE.

No
Freddy!
He's mine!
I saw him
first!

RICHARD.

That's how
you found
out about
us right?

BUDDY.

A beer!
Are you
hearing me
or not?

HENRI.

I'm going
as fast as I
can!

WES.

Ladies
please one
at a time!

(BUDDY slams his hands on the piano abruptly, stops playing, and gets up.)

BUDDY.

FINE! I'll
just get it
myself.

(RICHARD grabs a beer for BUDDY to calm him down. They head off.)

FREDDY. To be continued!

(FREDDY hands WES a bar napkin with his number on it.)

Call me baby!

(WILLIE chases FREDDY out of the room for stealing a potential date from him. WES and PATRICK are alone at the bar.)

PATRICK. Hey big spender.

WES. What can I say? I'm very generous.

(PATRICK misunderstands the implication, flirts back.)

PATRICK. Yeah... I can tell. I'm Patrick by the way.

(PATRICK holds out his hand for a shake.)

WES. Wes.

(WES touches it flaccidly, like it might lower his stock value.)

Love your bell-bottoms. Very retro.

(PATRICK matches WES' playful snark.)

PATRICK. And where'd you get *this* jacket?

WES. I made it.

PATRICK. Really??

(PATRICK touches WES' blazer, a little amazed.)

WES. Do you like it?

PATRICK. It's incredible. I've never seen anything like it. It's so –

WES. Equestrian meets nineties rave meets Upper East Side housewife divorces her husband and eats pussy for the first time?

(PATRICK laughs, a little shocked: "Uh –")

I'm ahead of my time.

(PATRICK flirts back, playing to WES' narcissism.)

PATRICK. Creative, handsome, ahead of your time. Sign me up.

WES. You think I'm handsome??

(PATRICK gives him a look – "Obviously.")

Trust me, I've spent enough time fixing my face on Photoshop. If my eyes were any farther apart I'd be a fucking hammerhead shark. Don't even get me started on my nose.

PATRICK. I'm sure the boys go crazy for you.

WES. Well I guess you've never heard the golden rule: No fats, no femmes, NO imperfections.

(DALE comes over. He tries to hand WES a beer.)

DALE. Hey. I uh. Got you a drink. To apologize for before.
We got off to / the wrong start –

WES. You got me a drink. With my money? Thanks!

DALE. Yeah. Well. Um. See you around.

(DALE walks away, awkwardly. WES laughs incredulously.)

WES. It's like I'm in a music video for the Village People!

(PATRICK is confused. WES sizes him up.)

You know – you're pretty cute for a hallucination.

PATRICK. Is that what you're into? Picking up guys and then telling yourself it was all in your head?

(PATRICK leans in closer, hustling. WES gets nervous, starts to stutter.)

Let's go to your place. / Shhhh.

WES. But. I – I. I haven't even seen any photos of you!

PATRICK. You're looking right at me.

WES. I mean.

(WES whispers, as if the word is too illicit to be said out loud.)

Na-ked.

PATRICK. Well come into the bathroom. I'll show you.

WES. I'd rather not see it, until I've *seen* it and know that it's something I want to see. Besides, the last time I went in there I got assaulted!

(PATRICK laughs.)

You think that's funny??

PATRICK. Take it easy. Outside of here we're *all* perverts.

WES. I'm not the one cruising for dick in the bathroom!

PATRICK. How do you cruise, Don Juan?

WES. You just do it on your phone. You say I'm Wes. Currently two feet away. Twenty-seven, 5'10", 140 pounds, and single. Looking for chat, dates, friends,

masc, femme, white, black, top, bottom, whatever. You filter out ninety-nine percent of the people you *know* you have no interest in, and then after you hook up, you block 'em and they never bother you again.

PATRICK. Sounds like a bathhouse. Just a lot less fun.

WES. I wouldn't be going to bathhouses if I were you. It's not safe.

PATRICK. I'd trust a boy in a towel, before I'd trust a boy in a photo.

WES. Yeah well... History will prove you wrong.

PATRICK. What are you psychic?

WES. I'm from the future! Ready for me to blow your mind? The Berlin Wall's gonna fall. Nixon's gonna resign. Michael Jackson is going to be *white*, our president is going to be *orange**, and all of our personal data will float around above us in a giant invisible cloud.

[MUSIC NO. 04 "WHAT I DID TODAY"]

(PATRICK is confused, tries to readjust his hustle accordingly.)

PATRICK. Oh...you like fantasy. Well – that's my life! Every *single* day: Magic. Adventure. Intrigue.

(PATRICK winks.)

It's exhausting.

TODAY I CLIMBED THE TALLEST TREE IN CITY PARK
AND SQUAWKED AT THREE OLD LADIES STROLLING BY
THEN I RAN TO CONGO SQUARE, WHERE JAZZ PERFUMED
THE AIR
AND GOT MY PALM READ BY A VOODOO PRIEST WITH A
GLASS EYE.
TODAY...

*(Guitar solo. PATRICK does a seductive dance/
something cute and gets a little too close to
WES, who shouts awkwardly:)*

*As long as Trump is president, please use "orange," otherwise change to "black."