

SWEEPS

Written by

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INT. KITCHEN - DAY

BRENDAN, the subject of the documentary, is adjusting his lav mic.

BRENDAN

Testing. Testing. Is this thing on?
Can you hear me now? Ha, ha, ha.

(flirty)

Marcus, you didn't tell me your
camera man was going to be so
adorable. What's your name again?

Suddenly, LOUD MUSIC blasts from next door.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Oh for Christ's sake.

Brendan storms out of the kitchen.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Not today Reymundo! They're filming
me! Reymundo?! What the fuck? Can
you turn off that goddam music?!

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Brendan makes coffee. Subtitle: BRENDAN O'HAGAN, TRIAL NETWORK PARTICIPANT.

BRENDAN

Look, the only reason I agreed to
appear on the Trial Network was I
thought I would win a free week at
the Ashley Simpson Beauty Spa
Vineyard and Small Mammal
Sanctuary.

(beat)

Obviously that backfired on me.
Anyway, I know I gave that
interview to NBC and I said that
whole thing about the power and
dignity of being tried in front of
America by my fellow Americans.

(whispering)

What I really wanted to say to
America was 'how the fuck did
smoking cigarettes become a capital
offense?' But I didn't. Instead, I
said a lot of horse doo doo I
didn't mean.

EXT. BACK YARD - DAY

Brendan kneels down to a large rock in the garden.

BRENDAN

I know I said I had no idea how the cigarettes ended up at my house.

Brendan turns over the rock, revealing a pack of cigarettes.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

That was a lie: I snuck them back with me from Tijuana. It was an innocent little jokey thing. I was going to have a dinner party and fix veal cutlets and martinis. An old-school kind of thing, okay? And then I thought maybe we'd have a couple of smokes afterwards and listen to Kylie. Old old-school.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Brendan stands in front of his house and looks annoyed.

BRENDAN

Oh, I know who squealed on me.

(pointing across street)

The husband and wife are in a Fleetwood Mac tribute band. You might ask how do I know it was them?

(points at different house)

My neighbor Rita said Stevie Nicks showed up one day with a brand-new juicer. A fucking Braun juicer.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Brendan sits at an outdoor table and eats toast with his coffee.

BRENDAN

I took my case to the Trial Network because it's such a sweet deal. In addition to a week at the spa if you win, TN puts you up in a nice hotel, provides your wardrobe, does your makeup, and gives you a limo with a mini bar.

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
What self-respecting gay man could
turn down a deal like that?

He sips his coffee and smiles.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
What not-so-self-respecting gay man
could turn down a deal like that?

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Brendan at the same table, finished with breakfast, petting a
cat in his lap.

BRENDAN
(to cat)
Cinammon's been a rock through this
whole thing, haven't you honey?

He feeds her a treat.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
The lobby at TN's corporate office
is huge. An agoraphobic's
nightmare. TN actually hires
someone whose sole job is to
comfort agoraphobics in the lobby.
You can tell who the agoraphobics
are. They're the ones who fall to
the pink marble floor and start
screaming as if they're about to be
pushed into the abyss. It's tragic.
(wicked smile)
But kind of exciting.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Brendan washes dishes.

BRENDAN
Bonnie was the TN producer assigned
to my trial and she was an all-
around great gal. Bonnie used to be
Chris Colfer's assistant, until she
and Chris had an "emotional" affair
and things went south rather
quickly. I told Bonnie I was
surprised because he seemed about
as gay as they come. Not that I
should judge.

He smiles at the camera man.

Brendan turns off the water and leans into the camera with gossipy delight.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

She told me he gave her the best foot massage of her life. Period. End of discussion.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Brendan sweeps the sidewalk.

BRENDAN

TN's image consultant, Maggie, was the first person in my life to figure out I'm a fall and not a winter. Maggie also helps people organize their closets on the side. I like to think she and I bonded in a meaningful way over fabric samples.

(smugly)

She told me I have the kind of pores women would kill for. I don't think Maggie says that to just anyone.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Brendan trims plants near a life-sized ceramic deer.

BRENDAN

As you know, they hired Kristen Stewart to play my attorney. At first I wasn't very enthusiastic, cause she always seems like such a Cranky Pants. It worked out fine though. The secret to working with her is to make sure she has a beer and a bear claw in the morning and then Little Miss Thing turns that frown upside down.

EXT. SIDE YARD - DAY

Brendan waters plants.

BRENDAN

Maggie, the image consultant, was the one who suggested I needed a wife before we went live with the trial. Bonnie loved the idea and so did Avril.

Brendan stops watering to use his hands for emphasis.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

A couple days before I'd asked Bonnie what would happen if America found out I was gay. I mean, I am gay, but I was willing to do whatever to win for the team. You know, 110%. Well Bonnie pulled out this map of the U.S. and pointed to the middle - to a brightly colored section that looked like a bloody T-bone steak - and she said ouch.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Brendan places cut flowers in a vase. One particularly wilted flower won't stand up straight.

BRENDAN

Why is everything in my life flaccid these days?

He tosses the flower.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Kristen was very adamant about getting an unknown to play my wife, that's why we went with Dolores. Dolores was very pretty and worked mostly in the airline industry. She did all of Frontier Airlines' in-flight safety videos. If you've ever flown from Denver to LA you've probably seen Dolores put an oxygen mask over her face first, then over her young child's.

Something about the flowers is off. He readjusts them.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

At our first rehearsal, Dolores brought homemade muffins for everyone. She said something about getting into the role and everyone laughed.

He readjusts the flowers again and is pleased with the results.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
I tried not to laugh too faggy. And
let me tell you, it was hard.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Brendan folds laundry.

BRENDAN
When the trial went live, we
watched from the greenroom as Robin
Williams, ugh, read the charges:
possession of tobacco and
transporting tobacco across
international borders. Kristen was
feeling pretty confident and up, so
we all drank champagne and toasted
each other. Then Kristen said, and
I quote, if they can't prove it was
lit, they have to acquit. But she
said it in a weird accent that
sounded like Eminem.

He holds up a T-shirt that says "If they can't prove it was
lit, they have to acquit." Withering smile.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
That's right. She even had T-shirts
made up. Quite honestly, some
people need to learn they can't
handle cheap champagne.

INT. WORKOUT ROOM - DAY

Brendan uses a rowing machine.

BRENDAN
Everyone loved Dolores and TN had
the numbers to prove it. She was
especially popular in bedroom
communities in the Midwest and we
all know what that means.

(pause)
I seemed to be popular in Eugene,
Oregon.

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Anyway, one day in the greenroom Bonnie congratulated Dolores because she'd just signed to be a spokesperson for Bed, Bath & Beyond, or something tragic like that. I tried to be enthusiastic, but the only thing that came out of my mouth was that this was my fucking trial and not hers.

Brendan stops rowing. Wicked smile.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

In a spiteful, petty way, I might add.

INT. WORKOUT ROOM - DAY

Brendan uses an inverse gravity machine. Head enters frame.

BRENDAN

So the day after our fight Dolores brought in a pan of homemade Peanut Butter Crunchy Cream bars. My favorite. Except, by the time Dolores got to me she didn't have any left.

(flipping back upright)
She "apologized" and I said something about trying to lose weight anyway, you know, because the camera adds at least fifteen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Brendan makes a grilled cheese sandwich.

BRENDAN

Danielle Radcliffe did a great job as the prosecutor. Even though he isn't American, his accent was flawless - I heard that he based it on Tim Allen's voice in the Santa Clause movies. Rupert was like a doberman, a little British doberman, he wanted to win this thing so bad. I wanted to ask him if he still had his wand, but we actually never got to talk because he was always in character.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Brendan sits at the table trying to pop a grape into his mouth. After two tries he finally gets one in.

BRENDAN

Did you see that? Did you catch that?

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

Brendan eats his sandwich.

BRENDAN

One day I saw Daniel and Dolores talking in the TN cafeteria. Rupert noticed me walking in and he stopped talking to Dolores. Now, I'd come in to get my usual lunch, the squid risotto on a bed of baby bok choy, but after I saw them, and they didn't smile, I got a Diet Coke and left.

He looks at his sandwich and realizes he isn't hungry. He tosses it on the plate.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Later, I asked Kristen when Daniel and Dolores had become such good friends and she got this puzzled look on her face. Real puzzled.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Brendan fills the bird feeders.

BRENDAN

I will admit, Dolores gave the performance of her life. On the stand she said how she'd come home early from work one day and found me not only having a cigarette, but also giving a blowjob to our neighbor Steve. Then Daniel called "Steve" to the stand and I realized the son of a bitch was this guy I'd gone out with one time, and yeah, we'd had sex and all, and then I hadn't called him back.

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

The only defense I can offer is I find it impossible to take a guy seriously, no matter how hot he is, if he's been to over nine dozen Clay Aiken concerts.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Brendan is weeding a cactus bed.

BRENDAN

Steve's on the stand and pretends like he's my best friend and says how one time at a neighborhood barbecue I'd put my hand on his knee and then another time I'd offered him scotch when he and his wife were having problems. I lost count of how many times he said he wasn't gay, he'd just been lonely and confused.

(rolls eyes)

A little on the nose if you ask me, but nobody was asking me. Kristen just kept shaking her head and saying ouch. Over and over again. Poor thing.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Brendan soaks in bubble bath.

BRENDAN

On the stand I told Kristen that yes, Dolores and I had been having a hard time, that Dolores was very angry that we couldn't have children, that we couldn't have children because of a profound injury I'd sustained during a peace-keeping mission in Kosovo, that I wanted to save my marriage but there's only so much emasculating anger a man can take.

(starting to get emotional)

I came up with the bit about having bought a football for my future son, years and years ago, during the sweet season of bliss right after the wedding.

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

How the football was on the desk in my office, and how each time I looked at it I died a little more inside.

He puts a washcloth up to his face and starts sobbing. A moment later he pulls the washcloth away with a triumphant smile.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

I thought I was fucking amazing.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Brendan, in his bathrobe, looks into the mirror at the camera. He plucks his eyebrows.

BRENDAN

When they turned off the studio lights, that's when it hit me - how could I possibly be having a cigarette and giving a blowjob? Not that I'm pointing fingers at Kristen, because I'm not. She was a total pro at the top of her game. If she doesn't get an Emmy nomination then the Academy really does have its head up its ass.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Still in his bathrobe, Brendan sits on the edge of the bed and clips his fingernails.

BRENDAN

Yeah, I've watched my testimony. You can tell where I start to lose my pitch. I don't think I ever come off as flaming, but I will agree with TV Guide's assessment - I seem a bit coquettish. And as you know, instead of saying Kosovo, I said Kokomo. As in, that dreadful Beach Boys song. Big difference.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Brendan stares at the house across the street with a wistful, almost sad expression.

BRENDAN

Dolores doesn't know I saw her carrying a Braun juicer to the parking lot. Maggie asked me to return all my fucking Dockers to the wardrobe department. In a memo that I had to sign.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

A jet takes off overhead from LB airport. Pan down to Brendan, who's flipping off the plane as it leaves.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Brendan sits on the back steps holding a lit cigarette.

BRENDAN

They're going to execute me right in the middle of sweeps week for TN - they're really feeling the pressure from Nancy Grace. Kristen's been surprisingly nice about the whole thing and says we could have won if we'd just carried a few more votes in New Mexico. I've never been to New Mexico but I imagine I would have liked it. Friends say Sante Fe is simply divine.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Brendan shows the camera a tie with little fairies on it.

BRENDAN

I won this in a very competitive Ebay auction. Isn't it fabulous? Like I have to ask.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Brendan finishes adjusting his tie in front of a mirror.

BRENDAN

The producers want me to do extra preparation for my emotional breakdown when the executioner, played by Tom Cruise--who's about as tall as an end table--hooks me up to the electric chair.

(shakes head)

It's not been going well. At the first rehearsal Tom pretended to touch the electric chair and said he hoped it was grounded. Everyone laughed except for me.

(beat)

What an ass.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brendan sits with a suitcase on his lap, staring at his flower arrangement.

BRENDAN

I know everyone thinks I'm being difficult because I'm afraid to die but that's not the reason at all. I guess I'm still upset that they signed Cameron Diaz to play my mother. She's so totally wrong for the part but no one is listening to me anymore. I just don't want my death to become about Cameron, and believe me, from the way she's been chewing up the scenery in rehearsals, it's only going to be about her.

The doorbell rings. Brendan checks his watch.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

But like I said, no one is listening to me anymore. And TN has the numbers to prove it.

He gets up and exits frame.