

Manfinders.com

By Bill Burleson

© Bill Burleson 2002
3542 45th Ave So.
Minneapolis, MN 55406

612.735.6549
www.william.burleson.org
bill@william.burleson.org

Author's Statement

Manfinders.com is an Internet site where men can place personal ads hoping to meet other men for any assortment of reasons, such as making friends, finding dates, and cruising for sex. The play takes place after the Resident placed an ad, corresponded with and eventually invited to his apartment the Visitor. We are a witness and participant in the initial uncomfortable judgment and indiscretion of their first face-to-face meeting.

While Manfinders.com is fictitious, such sites exist by the dozen. That being said, what the play is not about is cruising. The difficulties faced by the characters are not the result of Manfinders.com or cruising culture. Nor is this play about gay/bi society. Indeed, we are left to wonder how much better they would fair if only they would embrace their cultures. Instead, the conflict they face is far more prosaic; isolated by technology, abandoned by their families, they are left to wonder how to escape from their own personal prisons, if only for the night. In need they reach out and find each other, only for it to become apparent to our heroes and to the audience that they do not hold the solution to each other's tribulations.

About the author:

William Burlson is a Minnesota STD/HIV prevention educator, activist, and writer. He is the author of *Bi America: Myths, Truths, and Struggles of an Invisible Community*, a book about the bisexual community and the bisexual experience. Burlson is a regular speaker and workshop facilitator at college campuses, workplace LGBT groups, conferences, events, and community groups.

Current writing projects include *As The Bill Tolls*, a regular column for *Lavender Magazine* in Minneapolis, writing for *Lambda Literary Review*, and writing essays about bisexuality for various GLBT publications and electronic newsletters.

Manfinders.com

Cast:

The Resident: *a somewhat disheveled man in his 20's or early thirties.*

The Visitor: *an attractive, stylish man also in his 20's or early thirties.*

Set:

An old couch faces the audience. In front of the couch are a coffee table and a television, which is playing. There is a good deal of clutter on the coffee table and couch.

Scene:

The resident sits nervously on the couch, watching the television. He fidgets, mops his hair with his hand as if to smooth it down. He clears off a place on the couch by moving the clutter to the floor. There is a knock. The resident gets up, wipes his palms on his pants, and goes to answer the door.

Visitor: Hey.

Resident: Hi

Visitor: So you're "flyboy23"?

Resident: Yeah, and you're "superhot"?

Visitor: In person. Can I come in?

Resident: Oh, yes yes, come in.

Visitor comes in the room. Surveys room.

Visitor: Thanks for inviting me over so late. Nice place you have here.

Resident: Thank you. Care for something to drink?

Visitor: Yeah, thanks.

Resident: What would you like?

Visitor: How about a beer?

Resident: I don't have any beer. Sorry.

Visitor: What do you have?

Resident: Oh, let's see. I have Kool-Aid, pop...

Visitor: Do you have coffee?

Resident: Yes, yes I do. Would you like coffee then?

Visitor: What kind is it?

Resident: Oh, I don't know, let's see, I think its Sanka.

Visitor: I-e-e-e don't think so, how about a pop?

Resident: Sure, sure...

Visitor: What kind ya got?

Resident: Oh everything. I think I have pretty much every flavor.

Visitor: Of what?

Resident: Shasta

Visitor: OK, how about water?

Resident: Sure, sure...

Visitor: Bottled?

Resident: Tap

Visitor: Whatever.

The Resident goes off to get a glass of water. The visitor looks around the room in obvious distaste. He brushes off the couch with his hand and sits down as he yells loudly so the resident can hear him.

Visitor: So thanks again for having me over! Especially this late. I was out at the bars tonight dancing, having a few drinks, and I really got kinda horned up.

Resident: I couldn't sleep.

Visitor: Who needs sleep! Anyway, thanks. I was beginning to think that I wasn't going to meet anyone on that damn site. Man, it was like every ad was some loser. I swear, the ghost of Jeffery Dammer had an ad there.

The resident returns with the water. Hands water to the visitor.

Visitor: Thanks.

Resident: Oh, sorry, we'll have to keep it down; the walls are like paper here.

Visitor: Sure. I'm just saying I liked your ad.

Resident: Oh, thank you, I just put that ad up. I liked your reply. You were the only one who said anything about getting together on a regular basis.

Visitor: Did you get many replies?

Resident: No, actually you're the first one who answered.

Visitor: Early bird gets the worm.

Resident: The worm?

Visitor: Yeah, get it? Early bird gets the worm.

Pause

Visitor: Old expression, you must have heard it before. Oh, never mind.

Visitor sits down on couch, and the Resident joins him. Sitting as far away from the visitor as possible, the Resident watches television.

Visitor: So do you use Manfinders.com very often?

Resident: Oh, every once in a while.

Visitor: Yeah, me too. Every once in a while.

Resident: Not too often.

Visitor: Me neither, not too often. What I liked was that you said you were looking for a "buddy." Me too. I decided it was time to get hooked up with a regular fuck buddy.

Resident: Fuck buddy?

Visitor: Yeah, I'm not getting any younger, and it would be nice to have a regular trick I can count on. What about you?

Resident: I guess I would like a regular thing too. It would be nice to have a buddy to come over and watch TV and stuff.

Visitor: I don't know about TV, but I'm your guy for the stuff. Speaking of stuff...

The visitor leans a little closer. The resident doesn't seem to notice and just watches the television. The visitor leans back. Nervous pause. The visitor looks around the room, holds glass of water, and the resident looks at the television.

Visitor: Have you had many men over before?

Resident: A few. Oh, do you mean from Manfinders.com?

Visitor: Yeah, whatever.

Resident: Yeah, a few. Every once in a while.

Visitor: What do you like to do?

Resident: What do you mean?

Visitor: You know. What are you into?

Resident: "In to"?

Visitor: Yeah! You hook up with a guy up on Manfinders.com, you get together, and then...

Resident: And then?

Visitor: YES! Then what do you like to do?!

Resident: Oh, not much.

Visitor: Not much? What does that mean?

Resident: I don't know, mostly I just watch television. Sometimes I like to cook though, and I like romance novels...

Visitor: I'm not talking about romance novels! What do you like to do with another man? You know, SEX.

Resident: Oh sex!

Visitor: Yeah, oh sex.

Resident: Well, I like lots of things.

Visitor: Like what?

Resident: I like to kiss.

Visitor: Good. What else?

Resident: I like to hug.

Visitor: Lots of body contact. Good good. Go on.

Resident: I like oral sex.

Visitor: Now we're talking.

Resident: As long as we're safe, of course.

Visitor: Hey, safety is my middle name. Now, about that worm of yours...

Visitor leans a little closer to the resident.

Resident: How's that water doing? Do you need some more?

Visitor: It's doing just fine.

Visitor puts down the glass of water. Resident continues to watch the television. A minute passes.

Visitor: Hey, what do you say we turn that off?

Resident: Off?

Visitor: Yeah, off. It does turn off, doesn't it?

Resident: Oh sure. Sorry.

Resident turns the television off with the remote, but continues to watch the now silent television.

Visitor: So, you were about to tell me how you like your oral sex.

Visitor leans closer.

Resident: I was?

Visitor: Or maybe you were going to ask me what I like?

Resident: What...what do you like?

Visitor: Just about anything, oral, anal, top, bottom, a little nipple play...Hey, you know, the TV is off now, that means that you can stop watching it. Hey! Look at me!

Resident, startled, turns his head to look at the visitor.

Visitor: On Manfinders.com you said you were looking for some fun, didn't you?

Resident: Yeah. Would you like to pay some cards?

Visitor: Cards?! That's not the kind of fun I came here for.

Visitor leans over as to grab the resident. Resident jumps up and grabs the water glass.

Resident: Here, let me fill this up for you.

Visitor gets up

Visitor: Hey, maybe I should just go.

Visitor starts to walk to the door; resident chases after him.

Resident: No. Please stay? I'm sorry, I'm just nervous.

Visitor: It's ok, really. I understand nervous. But I'm getting a feeling you really don't want me here.

Resident: No, really I'm sorry, please stay?

Pause

Visitor: All right.

They both go back to their spots on the couch; the resident turns the television back on.

Visitor: Ok that's it!

The visitor gets up to leave. The resident quickly turns the TV off again.

Resident: No, I'm sorry! Really!

Visitor: No more television?

Resident: No

Visitor: Why do you watch that stuff anyway? It's all crap. It's like it's a brainwashing machine in the corner of every living room.

Resident: It's not so bad...

Visitor: Not so bad? It's trash. It's like the end of the world. Revelations must have something written about it. "And upon the land will descend a blight of glowing boxes that will enslave the sons of Israel." It's as if you can't have a thought now days without first getting it validated by Mark Shields, or Robert Novak, or Judge Judy. It's as if you don't have to have a real life if you can borrow one for a half hour at a time from Seinfeld or Kelsey Grahmer.

Resident: It's all I have.

Pause

Visitor: It's all you have? What do you mean? Don't you have any friends?

Visitor slowly goes back to sitting where he was before.

Resident: No, not really. I had lots of friends in high school, but I lost touch with them. Now all I do is watch Television. Do you watch Survivor? I really like those guys; they have it so hard, eating bugs and stuff, but no matter what they keep going.

Visitor: Don't you spend time with real flesh and blood people?

Resident: The people on Survivor are flesh and blood.

Visitor: I'm talking about a real person in the room with you, like we are doing now.

Resident: I used to spend all my time with my father.

Visitor: Really? Good for you. Where is he now?

Resident: He passed on. It still seems really quiet without him. I took care of him until he died. He had a bad heart. I had to help him with everything. He'd call me bobito Inutil.

Visitor: What does that mean?

Resident: It means useless fool.

Visitor: That's not very nice.

Resident: Oh, he didn't mean it that way; he just used it as kind of a pet name.

Visitor: Whatever.

Resident: Ever since he died I've pretty much been by my self. And when he was sick I really didn't have any time for friends or anything. I had to take care of him day and night. But back in high school, I had friends. I had lots of friends! We'd go out, all the time. Swimming, biking, to movies. There was a whole group of us who spent time together. But then... That's why I placed the ad at manfinders.com! I was hoping to meet new people...

Visitor starts to lean closer as if to kiss the resident.

Resident: Would you mind if we just talked a little bit more? It's nice to talk to someone. Sometimes I just need to talk first.

Visitor: OK then, what do you want to talk about?

Resident: What about your family?

Visitor: What about them?

Resident: Are you close? Do you get to spend time with your father?

Visitor: No. I haven't seen him in years.

Resident: Why?

Visitor: Well, if you must know it's because he couldn't handle the fact that I'm gay. When I came out, he said, "No son of mine is a fag!" and hit me. So I split, and I haven't looked back.

Resident: That's terrible!

Visitor: No big deal. Fuck'em. Who needs him.

Pause

Resident: You haven't asked me what I do.

Visitor leans back

Visitor: Yeah I did.

Resident: I mean for a living.

Visitor: OK, what do you do for a living?

Resident: I work for the Bald Eagle Center. I handle injured Bald Eagles. We nurse them back to health after they were hit by a car or shot.

Visitor: I wouldn't have guessed.

Resident: Guessed what?

Visitor: That you had such a cool job.

Resident: What do you mean? I know I'm no Jim from Wild Kingdom...

Visitor: Who?

Resident: ...But I get along well with the birds. They come in hurt and about to die, and we bandage them up, and feed them by hand until they are well. This week I'm working with a beautiful bird. Great wingspan. Very alert; you can see it in his eyes. He just looks at you, like he's saying, "go ahead, I'll let you take care of me." He thinks he's in charge.

Visitor: What happened to him?

Resident: He got caught in an animal trap. Smashed his leg up. He's lucky to be alive. Poor guy. It must have been so scary for him. They don't spend time on the ground you know. They are always flying or sitting on the top of a tree. Eagles only touch the ground when they are getting dinner. I can't imagine what he thought when he was trapped there, on the ground. I like how they are so strong, and how they need me. It's so sad when we finally let them go, and they fly off, never to be seen again. I keep hoping that they'll come back, just one last time, just to say goodbye, but they never do.

The resident starts to tear up.

Visitor: Hey, the main thing is that they got well, right?

Resident: I guess so.

Visitor: Not too many people can do what you do. I'd be scared to death. I'd be scared if the DID come back, swooping on in on ya, and here you are wishing they would.

They both laugh a little. Resident takes a sip of the water visitor's water.

Visitor: Tell me more about your family. Did your dad know you were queer?

Resident: Yeah. He was pretty mad about it at first, but he got over it.

Visitor: What about your mom? Are you out to her?

Resident: Yeah, I've been out since I was 18. She's pretty ok with it, she joined PFLAG and all.

Visitor: Where is she?

Resident: She left us. She remarried and lives in Seattle. Her new husband hates me, I'm sure. He calls me a fag.

Visitor: What happened after you mom left?

Resident: He didn't have much of a life after that. He dated a little, and then he got sick. He was sick for six years. I took care of him. Fed him. Played card with him. Watched TV with him.

Visitor: I bet that made him happy.

Resident: I don't know.

Visitor: You don't know?

Resident: No. He never told me if it did. Really, all he ever said was "come here and give me my dinner, bobito inutil!" "Hey bobito, when are you going to clean this place up?"

Visitor: Man that's rough.

Resident: Oh, I don't know. He really didn't mean it the way it sounds. That's just his way. My dad is a big, strong guy; he was a Marine and served in Vietnam. Then he became a manager for 3M; I guess he was used to getting what he wanted. I think he was just angry from being sick. I don't know. I guess he was always angry. He used to yell at my mom too, that's why she left.

Visitor: So when did you first realize you were gay?

Resident: I'm bisexual.

Visitor: Yeah? Whatever. You know what they say: bi now, gay later.

Resident: I've identified as bi now for ten years.

Visitor: Really? Wow. So you've had relationships with both men and women?

Resident: Yeah. Well, mostly men. I did date a woman from my church for a while, but it didn't work out.

Visitor: Because you are bi? Or didn't you tell her?

Resident: I told her. It was just that I couldn't really see her very often after my dad got sick. Plus, she was kinda boring.

Visitor laughs loudly.

Resident: What's so funny?

Visitor: Oh, nothing.

Resident: What about you? Have you ever been out with a woman?

Visitor: Sure. A couple of times.

Resident: Have you ever had sex with a woman?

Visitor: Yeah, of course.

Resident: Really? Wow. I can't wait.

Visitor: What do you mean you can't wait. Are you telling me you never have had sex with a woman?

Resident: No.

Visitor: So you call yourself bi and you've never had sex with a woman?

Resident: Well, I want to.

Visitor laughs

Visitor: What about with men?

Resident: I don't have that much experience really. Although, in high school I was in love with my best friend, Terrence.

Visitor: Ah, young love.

Resident: I miss him. Terrance was wonderful. He was tall, even taller than you. He looked a lot like Baldwin on NYPD Blue. He wore his hair really short; like people do now, but back then it was kinda risky.

Visitor: Risky?

Resident: Yeah, it's not like we were out then. Although, we did go to prom together.

Visitor: Get out of here!

Resident: We had girl dates.

Visitor: Oh. Little did they know...

Resident: They knew. They knew all about it. They were lovers too.

Visitor: Cool. You went to prom with your boyfriend and a couple of dykes for dates. Great! So what happened to this guy?

Resident : Terrance went off to college, and we kinda lost touch.

Visitor: That's too bad.

Resident: But get this! I was watching television...

Visitor: No!

Resident:and on one of these cable stations that is some city's local station I was watching the local news. And there he was!

Visitor: Getting thrown in the back of a police car?

Resident: No, he was a reporter!

Visitor: Cool!

Resident: I watched for Terrance after that every night, but he was never on again.

Visitor: You could get in touch with him there.

Resident: I thought about it, but I don't know. What would I say?

Visitor: I don't know. How about I miss you? I love you?

Resident: I do...did love him.

Short pause

Resident: What about you?

Visitor: What about me?

Resident: Tell me about yourself. What do you do?

Visitor: Well, like I said, I'm into just about anything, oral, anal, top, ...

Resident: No I mean, what do you do for a job?

Visitor: I work at the Saloon.

Resident: Oh! I've heard of that place!

Visitor: Everyone has; it's a very popular club. It's probably the most popular gay bar in town.

Visitor: What do you do there?

Visitor: I'm a bartender.

Resident: Wow! You're a bartender at the Saloon!

Visitor: Yeah, it's no big deal.

Resident: I can't imagine all the men you most meet.

Visitor: Yeah, it's a lot like being a rock star. You always get to go home with the best piece of ass.

Resident: Do you get to talk much?

Visitor: Talk?

Resident: Yeah, with the men, your customers.

Visitor: Well, yeah, hundreds of them a night.

Resident: Wow!

Visitor: Not wow. The conversations are pretty limited. I mean, it IS a bar. All I have time for is to take orders. Give me a scotch and soda! Give me a rum and coke!

And every once in a while, Hey, do you know where I can get some ecstasy?
There's no time to talk really in a bar, and it's way too noisy anyway.

Resident: Oh.

Visitor: It's really kinda strange. I can be working along, the techno blasting, hundreds of people standing around, talking, touching, flirting, arguing, anything. And there I am, oblivious to it all. I'm in my own little world, all by my self.

Resident: I understand.

Visitor: I doubt that. But I tell you what, you can have it. I'm sick of the stink of cigarettes, I'm sick of the smell of spilt booze, and I'm sick of being hit on all the time. Every night, I work until one A.M. Usually I just end up not being able to sleep and surfing the web half the night. Every night I leave with a splitting headache. I don't know if it's the smell of the booze or the cigarettes, or if it's the techno, or all of the above. One way or another, I think it will kill me.

Resident: If you don't like it, why do you work there?

Visitor: It pays good. And it's got its pluses. For me, I really don't want a job with a lot of responsibility. Jobs with responsibility always interfere with your life too much. All I need is enough cash to have some fun.

Resident: What do you do for fun?

Visitor: Well, I spend most of my time on the Internet. Usually you can find me at several chat rooms I like to hang out in. If you can get away from the kids, they can be fun. I talk to people all over the world. I have friends in the Philippines, Australia, Japan, all over! It's cool! We exchange pictures and stuff. Some good pictures, if you know what I mean. What's really cool though, is that you get to talk about stuff that you'd never ever talk about with anyone face to face. It can get deep. It's amazing how well you can know someone you've never met. Do you spend much time online?

Resident: No. I'll have to try it some more. I just got my computer, and I don't really know how it all works.

Visitor: Didn't you say that you've met guys at manfinders.com?

Resident: Yeah, I did. I don't know why I said that. You're the first guy I've met there.

Visitor: Oh. Once you get into the web, you'll find it's a great way to meet lots of guys.

Resident: You mean meet guys like on the Manfinders.com?

Visitor: Yeah, whatever.

Resident: That's what I was hoping for. I think I spend too much time alone. I want to meet some new people.

Visitor: There are lots of places to meet people on the web. There are a ton of gay sites with personals. Most of them aren't looking for sex; in fact, most of them are looking for a "sole mate" or some such crap. Don't think that gay folks have it all to ourselves, either. There are a lot of straight men and women looking for love too.

Resident: Meeting a sole mate!

Visitor: Whatever. I'll leave the sole mate shit to other people; I just want to have fun.

Resident: You do a lot of cruising?

Visitor: Well, yeah, I guess, but not like it's everyday or anything. Sometimes just I go to the bars, like earlier tonight. You can always meet guys there. Just last Sunday I had the night off, and I headed down to the Saloon to see who was about. It was kinda quiet, but then here was this guy I had been seeing around. Big guy, a bear, you know?

Resident: A bear?

Visitor: Yeah, you know, a big guy, lots of red hair, facial hair and hairy chest. I'm not usually the bear type, but something about this guy... I don't know what it was, but I thought he was so hot. I could see he was just surfing the bar, circling, circling. We ended up at his place. It was good, it was REAL good. Not just the sex either. Something about this guy...he had a way about him. He was kinda gentle...he had a gentleness about him. When he put his arms around me I felt almost, I don't know, safe.

Resident: Are you going to see him again?

Visitor: Well, at the bar I guess.

Resident: Do you have a lot of friends? I bet you have a lot of friends.

Visitor: Yeah, sort of. Well, not a lot, but some good friends. I see them down at the bar. It's nice to see them...When I'm off work I'll hang out with my crew and look for men.

Resident: It must be nice to spend your time with friends... watch TV with them.

Visitor: Well, we don't watch TV. If they come over, it's to fuck, not watch TV.

Resident: You have sex with your friends?

Visitor: Sometimes. Sure. Why not?

Resident: Don't get me wrong, I like sex...

Visitor: ah-ha, yeah.

Resident: ...but what I really want is a friend to watch TV with. No, not watch TV. Just to be with. Not to do anything.

Long pause.

Visitor: I don't know. I guess I used to think that having friends would be more like what you said, just being with someone. But things change. I like my friends, but ... I don't know. Maybe I don't.

Resident: What do you mean?

Visitor: I don't know. There's not much there. We party, and that's fun and all. We'll hang around the clubs together. It's nice to have people to hang around the bar with, but... All we talk about is each other. One catty thing after another. I'm tearing Thomas up, Thomas is tearing Jason up, Jason is tearing Raul up, and on and on. You'd think we really didn't like each other at all.

Pause

Visitor: Maybe we don't.

Resident: I'm sorry.

Visitor: Don't be. What do you mean you're sorry? I have it made. A steady job, lots of really hot sex... what more can a person ask?

Resident: I'm sorry.

Visitor: Don't be. I'm sorry too. I shouldn't have snapped at you like that.

Pause

Visitor: The thing is, I'm just not the settling down type. I like to live life to its fullest. I see my friends settling down, one by one, getting their house in the suburbs with their husbands and their dog and their white picket fences.

Resident: I like dogs.

Visitor gets increasingly agitated

Visitor: You're missing the point. I just don't want to become a homo-normalis. It seems like everyone wants to be just like straight people. Well, I don't get it. I'm going to have as much fun as I can while I'm still young enough to enjoy it. Suburban gays make me sick. They think they are so superior. They think they are so much better than me. I'm getting laid three times a week, and they think they're superior!

Resident: You get laid three times a week?

Visitor: And THEY think they are so much better. Shit!

Resident: They're not.

Visitor: They're not what?!

Resident: Better than you.

Visitor clams down

Visitor: Damn right

Short pause

Visitor: Thanks. I appreciate that. I'm sorry I got so excited, but sometimes...

Resident: Sometimes...

Visitor: ... sometimes I feel like I'm being left behind.

Resident: Yeah?

Visitor: Nothing. Skip it.

Resident: Have you been out for very long?

Visitor: Yeah, I guess. Five years now.

Resident: It must have been hard to come out to you dad and then to get that reception.

Visitor: Well, I don't know ... hey, I made it up.

Resident: Made what up?

Visitor: The dad thing. I made it all up. I never came out to him, and he never hit me. I just tell people that...I don't know why, I just do. He's retired now; I think he spends all day putzing around in the garden.

Resident: I like gardening.

Pause. Visitor gets up and paces around couch.

Visitor: Yeah, whatever. The thing is, he doesn't have a life. He just does the same old shit day after day. Goes to the same restaurant, visits with his old friends, hangs out at the VFW. My mom too. Same crap every day. Bingo on the weekends. For sixteen years of my life we did that shit together, then one day...they just looked right through me. And I was out of there.

Resident: I knew that my dad loved me to the end.

Visitor: Well good for you.

Resident: I'm sorry, I didn't mean it that way. The thing is, my dad loved me, I'm sure he did, he just never knew how to show it. But I know he does.

Visitor: "Knew." You mean "Knew"

Resident: What?

Visitor: Don't act all high and mighty with me! Your dad this, Terrance that. Get a fucking life! Their gone! Now what do you have? TV. Shit. Like you could ever have it even half as good as I got it. Your dad thought you're a useless fool! He didn't love you; he just thought you were his nurse!

Resident leaps to his feet.

Resident: You can't say that! You can't say that! He loved me! He may not have been able to say so, but he did! I know I don't have a life...I know. I want to! I did! How would you feel if you had to take care of a grown man twenty-four hours a day? Can you even imagine what it would be like to empty a bedpan twenty times a day? Do you think you'd be out at the bars cruising for men then? I had a life! I was in love! And he loved me! Do you have any idea how much I miss that? How much I miss him? How much I miss his touch, his smell, the love we made? We were sole-mates! Then he went off to college, and I got to spoon-feed my own

father for the last six years. I could have had a life! Instead, I had to watch my big strong father whither away and die!

Visitor: Hey, calm down...

Resident: Don't you tell me what to do! Don't you tell me what to do!

Long pause, as the resident just stands there motionless.

Resident: I'm sorry. Sometimes I feel...

Visitor: Me too.

Resident: You OK?

Visitor: Yeah. I'm OK. Are you all right?

Resident: Yeah.

Visitor: I think it's time for me to go.

Resident: Are you sure? You can stay.

Visitor: No. I think I'll go.

Resident: Do you want to have sex?

Visitor: No.

Resident: Me neither.

They both laugh.

Visitor: Hey tell me the truth. Have you ever cruised for sex before?

Resident: No.

Visitor: That's cool. I hope you find what you are looking for.

Resident: Thanks. You too. Hey, what's your real name? I never got your name.

Visitor: Steven. What's yours?

Resident: Mine's Steve too.

They laugh.

They start to walk toward the door.

Resident: Will I see you again?

Visitor: Give me your number.

Resident moves to get a pen and paper from the table.

Visitor: No don't bother. I never call. Nothing personal. I just never call.

Resident: Maybe you'll call me.

Visitor: I never call. I don't want you to think otherwise. Usually, I just take the number and go, saying "we'll get together again soon!" or some such bullshit, but I know I never call. I just feel like I need to be honest with you. I feel I owe it to you. You're the first person I've been able to talk to in I don't know how long, and I don't want to leave on a lie.

Resident: Thanks for coming by.

Visitor: Thanks for having me.

Visitor: Hey Steve.

Resident: What?

Visitor: Get some beer and some good coffee.

Resident: My dad drank Sanka.

Visitor: Oh.

Resident: Can I ask you a question Steven?

Visitor: Anything.

Resident: Do you really have sex three times a week?

Visitor: What do you think?

Resident: You do!

Visitor: Can I ask you a question Steve?

Resident: Yes, sure.

Visitor: Did you really go the prom with your boyfriend?

Resident: What do you think?

Visitor: Outstanding.

They walk to the door Pause as they look at each other. They kiss deeply.

Visitor: Thanks for everything.

Resident: Maybe I'll see you online.

Visitor: Maybe I'll see you on Television.

They laugh. Visitor starts to leave, and turns and looks back.

Visitor: And, oh, by the way Steve, you're not a bobito.

The visitor leaves. The resident slowly returns to the couch and sits down. He looks around. He looks at the television. He picks up the remote and slowly examines it, as if thinking about whether he wants to use it.

Appendix

Characters: The Resident

“My name is Steve, I’m 28 and I was born in Los Angeles. My family moved here when I was nine so my dad could go to work for 3M. He was in sales, and wasn’t home much. I am an only child; my mother says ‘why have another when you got it right the first time?’ They got divorced several years ago before my dad became sick. I took care of him until he died last year, since then I’ve been pretty much alone here. I don’t know too many people. Oh, every once in a while I’ll go with some people from work to a bar, but they don’t invite me very often since I really don’t drink, and I’ve noticed that when people are drinking they don’t like to be around someone drinking a pop.

“Like I said, I don’t really do that much. Of course I do watch television, but everyone watches television. I was thinking that I’m tired of being alone, and I want to meet someone to spend time with. To cook for. Maybe go out together. Someone to take care of. So I decided to place an ad at a personals site. I just got this computer, and I right away put an ad up. I was so excited to get a response! It’s been so long since I’ve spent time with anyone. I’m really nervous! I hope he likes Survivor!

“I used to be a lot more outgoing, before my dad became sick and I started staying home all day. In high school, I had some good friends and we spent all our time together. And I was in love! Oh, was I ever! Terrance was so sweet and nice. We weren’t ‘out’, of course, but we really had a special thing. He and I and a bunch of friends would go swimming every day in the summer. The best part was Terrance and I could fool around in the water and no one would see! I haven’t seen too many people since then. Oh, there was that nice neighbor for a while, and a friend from church, but nothing like Terrance.

“Did I mention I’m bisexual? I would really be happy with either a man or a woman. I have more experience with men though. I’m little shy around women, but I think about them all the time. Being bi really weards some guys out though; I don’t know why. Maybe because they are afraid I’ll meet a girl and leave them. But I wouldn’t! If I’m in love, I know that I’ll want to be with that person for the rest of my life. Isn’t that the point?”

Characters: The Visitor

My name is Steven. I'm 27, and I like having fun. I enjoy my friends and my lovers. I think a lot of people would be jealous of me if only they knew how I've got it going on. I work out at the Downtown Y where all the cute men are. A lot of guys that hang out there are either posing or cruising, but I'm really into sculpting my body. Not that I'm above a little fun in the sauna! What I'm saying is that I'm not one of those phonies who think they are so hot and buff and hung...You hang with me you're hanging with the real deal.

I was born and raised in Minneapolis, but I like to think that I am a LA kinda guy. I'm no fucking farmer! I think I'd fit in a lot better in West Hollywood than on machinery hill at the state fair! Anyway, my folks divorced a few years ago, not that I care. Fuck'em. Really I've been on my own all my life anyway. I don't need no body. No way. I've got it good.

I work at the Corral, the best gay club in the Twin Cities. I'm a bartender, and a good one too. You wouldn't believe the shit that happens there, but that's another story. When I'm not working I usually go out with my crew to the bars. We always close the place! Usually a buddy and I will cruise around the bar and the dance floor and see who's there. If there is someone there I know then I'll hang out with them, otherwise I'll make new friends. Believe me, it's not hard for me! End of the night brings the cattle call. That's where after closing time and everyone has been kicked out for the night, they're all little drunk you see, guys will hang around on the sidewalk out front for some last minute shopping. I really hate that, to tell you the truth. It seems so desperate. I don't do it, but a lot of guys do.

I don't have a relationship right now. To tell you the truth, I'd say I've never really had a real relationship. I'm not looking for one neither. Don't need one! So many gay guys are settling down and living the quote "normal" life, middle class jobs, going to Democratic Party dinners, joining book clubs. Fuck'em. I get all the action I want any time I want. Why get married?

The best thing that's happened to me is the internet. Fuck, that thing is great. I often get home from the bars, and if I don't have company and I want some, I just go on-line to Manfinders.com. I have an ad there, so first I'll check my messages, but then I'll go to the live chat and see who's around. I've met so many guys there! Usually they have a picture up so I don't have to waste my time. Too many phonies there; you have to be careful. But if you're lucky, you can get some excellent sex.