

Jumping – Wilmot – 519-932-0342 mgwilmot@rogers.com

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By

Michael G Wilmot
137 Devonshire Ave London Ontario Canada
N6C 2H9
519-932-0342

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Cast: Father 45 - 50
Son 19

The living room of a family home.

SON: It's good to be home....I didn't realise I'd miss it so much.

FATHER: Good to have you home son, the house was pretty quiet with you off at school...the fridge was strangely full, and my car was always there when I needed it!

SON: (smiling) Well, that could change over the next week!

FATHER: Not that I'm complaining, but don't most of your university friends take off somewhere to party over March break?

SON: Some of them do, but I thought I'd come home and grace the fossils with my presence! Besides...I have six months of laundry in the car!

FATHER: I'm sure your mother would be more than happy to point you in the direction of the laundry room. (looking out the window) Did you notice the Robertsons cut down that big oak tree in their back yard while you were gone?

SON: (going to window) No I didn't.....wow that's going to let a lot more light into our yard isn't it?

FATHER: Yeah, I was surprised they did it, because the tree looked fine, but apparently it was dying on the inside so they had to do something.

SON: Just chopped it down did they?

FATHER: No actually...it was very interesting. They took it down bit by bit, almost like they were dismantling it. They were very careful about it. It was unusual though, in the morning the tree was there as it had been for years and by the afternoon it was gone. You're right though, it does let a lot more light in....I'm not sure if I should miss it or not!

SON: Well I think it's an improvement, nothing grew well in the shade of that tree.

FATHER: We'll see. Anyway...dinner should be ready in a few minutes, in the meantime....I can't believe I'm actually saying this to my son but....do you want a drink?

SON: Well, I am 19 now.

FATHER: (smiling) I know, I know, but I can't help still thinking of you as that little guy I taught how to ride a two wheeler and put on my shoulders so you could see the Santa Claus parade and...

SON: Ok Ok...let's stop before you get to the part about my cowboy pajamas! I'll have a rye and coke.

FATHER: Bleechhh, but as the French say "A chacun son gout"

SON: Huh?

FATHER: So much for university turning you into a sophisticate....loosley translated it means "each has their own taste" or maybe "I taste like gouda" I'm not sure....but one rye and coke coming up. I think I'll have a nice scotch and soda. (*goes to the bar and makes the drinks*) So, tell me about life on the big campus! Must be quite a change of pace for you compared to our sleepy little town.

SON: Oh yeah, it took a while to get used to. Everything seems to move faster, they piled the work on at school, there were a thousand things to do, lots of new people to meet...

FATHER: Sharon's been asking about you.

SON: Oh?

FATHER: Yes, she wondered how you were doing. I think she's still a little confused.

SON: Really?

FATHER: To tell you the truth, your mother and I are too. You and Sharon had been going out for quite a while, we thought it was serious.

SON: It was serious. As serious as it could be.

FATHER: You can't blame her for being a little confused, you go off to school then right away you break up with her. She'll be there in September, I think she hoped you'd wait for her.

SON: She understands.

FATHER: She doesn't seem to.

SON: She does.

FATHER: I don't want to be nosey, but did you meet someone else?

SON: I met a lot of people. It's a whole new world Dad.....it really opened my eyes to new ideas and possibilities.

FATHER: That's what university is supposed to do son, I'm glad you're open to it....letting it happen! This can be a wonderfully exciting time of your life, new ideas, philosophies, concepts! If you can accept the new ideas, it can turn your whole world inside out, in a good way!

SON: Boy, you're not kidding!

FATHER: I love seeing this happen to you! I know it sounds a little trite but...the boy is becoming a man. I'm proud of you son.

SON: You're sure?

FATHER: Sure about what?

SON: That you're proud of me.

FATHER: Of course I'm sure, why would you ask that?

SON: I think I'm really going to need you to be, that's all.

FATHER: What do you mean?

SON: It's just that a lot of things have changed...

FATHER: Of course they have son! That's why you go to university.....if nothing changed you'd still be working at McDonalds when you're 50!

SON: It's not just change, it's also finding a maturity I didn't have before...

FATHER: As I said, the boy is becoming a man!

SON: ...realising what's true and what's important.

FATHER:so I guess you realised Sharon wasn't important, not the one for you.

SON: She is important Dad, she'll always be very special to me and she knows that, but no...she's not the one for me.

FATHER: So you *have* met someone else.

SON: Yes.

FATHER: Another thing about university is, it's good time to sow your wild oats!

SON: There you go being trite again.

FATHER: I guess I am! But you are being....you know...careful?

SON: Careful?

FATHER: You know...using protection? We don't want the pitter patter of tiny feet around here just yet!

SON: No fear of that.

FATHER: Good you always were smart. So...do you want to tell me about her? You know "man to man"! (*pause*) Does she have a name?

SON: Yes, there's a name....

FATHER: (*waiting*) ...and that name would be.....

SON: (*pause as he takes a deep breath*) Terry.

FATHER: Terry. That's "Terri" with an "i"?

SON: No, with a "y".

FATHER: A "y". That's unusual.

SON: In what way?

FATHER: Well, most women usually spell it with an "i".

SON: Then that would mean it's not unusual.

FATHER: I don't follow.

SON: Terry spells his name with a "y".

FATHER: I still don't follow....

SON: Terry. Terry spells *his* name with a “y”

FATHER: *His* name?

SON: Yes

FATHER: Terry. Terry’s a man?

SON: Yes

FATHER: You mean he’s your friend...your roomie...your buddy...

SON: More than that....

FATHER: (*becoming anxious*) What do you mean “more than that? How can he possibly be more than that?

SON: He just is, he’s.....more than that.....

FATHER: What? What? You mean he’s your frat brother, your...your...what else is there? Come on, tell me...what? What?

SON: He’s..... my lover.

FATHER: (*pause*) Your what?

SON: You heard me.

FATHER: No, I don’t think I did. I couldn’t have. That’s not what you said. No No...you’re putting me on.

SON: No Dad. He’s my lover.

FATHER: No!! Don’t say that ...*don’t say that!*....that’s crazy, you don’t know what you’re saying.... he can’t be your lover....

SON: He is.

FATHER: NO!!

SON: Dad...I’m gay. I’ve always known I was...

FATHER: Shut up! Shut....up....you are not gay. Don’t say that, I can’t hear that...

SON: Dad, this isn’t easy....

FATHER: Don't say that. There's nothing to say....we'll forget about this...you'll forget about this.....you don't know what you're thinking...

SON: It's not about what I'm thinking, it's about what I'm feeling.

FATHER: What the hell do you know!?!? You're only 19 years old!

SON: I know how I feel and I know who I love!

FATHER; Love!! Now it's love!! Jesus H Christ, can you hear yourself!?!?

SON: Please Dad....please...

FATHER: Please!? Please what? Please say it's OK that you're standing here telling me that you and this Terry are...are...shit, I can't even say it. God damn it.

SON: This isn't something that I just decided, it's been inside me all my life.

FATHER: This isn't something inside you...it's nothing, it's a phase, you're confused...experimenting. Are you on drugs?

SON: No Dad, no drugs, believe me. This is me, this is who I am.

FATHER: I'll tell you who you are! You're the boy your mother and I raised to be a good solid responsible citizen, to be respectful of yourself, and honest and...

SON: I am Dad! Now more than ever!

FATHER: We did not raise a homosexual! This is not you, look at yourself, this not you!

SON: It *is* me. It's always been me. For the first time in my life I'm happy with who I amI'm not ashamed anymore.

FATHER: Well you damn well should be!! Christ, what are we going to do? Doctors...I can get you doctors, psychiatrists, whatever it takes, I can get you help....

SON: Dad, I don't need doctors....

FATHER: Don't tell me what you need!! I send you away to university thinking you're mature enough to handle it....and THIS is what you get into?!! This is the bullshit you bring back into my house! You don't know shit!

SON: It's the way I am, I can't help it...

FATHER (angry) Yes you can help it, don't give me that crap! Who talked you into this...was it one of your profs? I'll kill the son of a bitch....

SON: Nobody talked me into this, I've always been this way...

FATHER: Bullshit, Bullshit, you have not! What about Sharon...what about her?

SON: We never made love. She knows I'm gay, I told her before I went to university and she understands.

FATHER: What!?! No...no...she would have told us. We just talked to her last week.

SON: I asked her not to say anything until I had a chance to talk to you. She knows Dad, she knows and she accepts it.

FATHER: (*angry and sarcastic*) Then what were you doing out on all those dates? Comparing colour swatches?

SON: I wasn't sure at first, but I always knew that I was different and so did Sharon...that's why she understands.

FATHER: She understands what? That you'd rather play with some guys' dick than make love to a woman? Christ, I think I'm going to throw up.

SON: She understands that I'm not the same as the guys who date women, I'm different, I'm....

FATHER: Oh you're different all right! You're different than the boy I raised, you're different than the son I thought I had...

SON: I'm still the son you've always had.

FATHER: You think so!! You really think so!! My son walked out that door in September to go to school. And what walked back in today? A fag! What's wrong with you?!

SON: (*getting angry*) Nothings wrong wrong with me!! Nothing!! Whether you love a man or a woman, what difference does it make as long as it's true, and you're true to yourself. I'm not sick!! I don't need "the cure" ! I'm a man who loves another man and that's just as honest as a man who loves a woman!

FATHER: "A man who loves another man" God..that makes me want to puke. You're no man...you're a confused little boy who doesn't know what the hell he wants!

SON: I'm a man who knows....

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FATHER: You're no man and you're no son!!!

SON: (*pause, quietly*) What did you say.

FATHER: You heard what I said.

SON: You said "you're no son"

FATHER: That's right. As far as I'm concerned you're no son of mine.

SON: Holy shit you thought you were trite before, just listen to yourself now!

FATHER: Don't use that language with me!

SON: Why not, I'm not you're son, remember!?

FATHER: No son of mine's going to be a flaming god damned queer!

SON: I'm still the same person I was half an hour ago! The same person you hugged when he came in the door, the same person you said you were proud of. The same person who sat on your shoulders watching the Santa Claus parade.

FATHER: No. No you're not.

SON: How can who I love, change the love you have for me? How can that be?

FATHER: I don't want to hear any more.

SON: Dad, I love you...

FATHER: I said *I don't want to hear any more!*

SON: (*pause*) What now?

FATHER: Leave

SON: What?

FATHER: I said leave. Leave this house and don't come back.

SON: But Dad, I

FATHER: Don't call me that. My son was a man, What's standing in front of me is no man and is not welcome under my roof.

SON: A man. What did you tell me a man was? A man is true to himself. A man takes responsibility for his actions. A man doesn't run and hide. A man loves and gives love. A man stands up for what he believes. A man is honest.

FATHER: See if you can find yourself in there somewhere. I rather doubt it. A man doesn't love other men, a man....a man....

SON: ...is honest about who he loves.

FATHER: Just go.

SON: There's nothing we can...

FATHER: I said go!!!

(Sons turns and leave. Father speaks as he reaches the door)

FATHER: Wait. *(son stops)* You do know I'm serious.

SON: Yes, I gathered that.

FATHER: When you walk out that door, it's over. You don't exist anymore.

SON: I know.

FATHER: Why? Why are you doing this?

SON: I'm not *doing* anything. This is the only option I have, the only option I can live with. I knew you'd be hurt, I knew you'd be angry, but I thought we could weather it, I thought I'd face up to it and we'd come out the other side. It didn't turn out that way, but simply because it's become harder than I ever imagined...I can't change who I am, what I am. This is what I have to do.

FATHER: You'd leave everything, everybody?

SON: Yes

FATHER: Me, your mother, your family, your home?

SON: Yes

FATHER: I don't understand...

SON: I didn't chose to be who I am. I can't change who I am and moreso, I don't want to change who I am. All I can do is accept it and embrace all that accompanys it.

FATHER: Even if it means losing everything?

SON: If there's one thing in life I have to hang on to, and it's who I am. I can't be true to anybody else unless I'm true to myself. I won't drift. I will sacrifice for that. The boy is becoming a man.

(There is a very long pause as they look at each other. The Son's expression changes from anger and hurt to hope. The Father shows a dawning realisation. He is fighting back tears)

FATHER: Oh my God....my son....my beautiful brave son...

(he opens his arms to his son)

END