

SHOCK VALUE - "PILOT"

Written by

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Based on  
"Shock Value" by John Waters

INT. WATERS HOME - SAME

Patricia pulls an envelope opener out from a kitchen drawer, slices open the top of a white envelope.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

Jeez, where are my manners? You don't even know who I am yet. My name is...

PATRICIA

(Sternly)

John Samuel Waters.

John, now a long-faced teenager with greasy hair, pokes his head around the corner sheepishly.

JOHN

Yeah?

John's voice is younger and squeakier here than the voice over. He's retroactively narrating his life omnisciently.

PATRICIA

Why in the heck am I readin' a letter sayin' that you and Mary got ticketed for loitering?

JOHN

Loitering? Me? Loiter? I'm saving myself for marriage, the mere indication is absurd.

PATRICIA

John you know darn well what loiter means and you know darn well you shouldn't be loitering outside bars. You can't drink.

JOHN

Ma all kinds of kids my age drink, you are clearly trying to damper my chances at making friends and influencing others.

PATRICIA

John I do not find this funny.

JOHN

This isn't nearly as bad as that priest, he gave me wine and crackers in front of the entire communion. I think he liked seeing me all dressed up.

Patricia is obviously used to her son's wit. She sighs.

PATRICIA

Just stay away from the seedy parts  
of the city, okay?

JOHN

Crystal clear, mom. Want me to  
bring you anything from the public  
castration I'm doing tonight?

PATRICIA

John!

John laughs. He grabs his coat on the way out the door.

EXT. WATERS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

John walks down the street with confidence. He's a total  
weirdo, but comfortable in his own skin. "Henry the VII, I  
Am" by Herman's Hermits plays.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

I was on my way to my best friend  
Mary's house for a night of  
perverse entertainment.

EXT. PIERCE HOUSE - SAME

John knocks on the door. MARY, a skinny girl with a soft  
voice and bond hair, answers.

MARY

Hey hon.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

Hold on just a sec, I know what  
you're thinkin' about me and Mary,  
but I have some bad news for ya.  
Don't get excited for some "friends  
to lovers" thing here. I'm gay.  
That's pretty set in stone.

INT. SAUNA - FANTASY

John, in a towel, sits across from a muscular man also in a  
towel. They stare at one another longingly.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

So don't expect some scene like you see in every gay movie where I have an intimate encounter with my ski instructor or something and it awakens some feeling deep inside me. That's all bullshit.

John and the muscular man inch closer, embrace.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

Although that would be a good scene.

INT. WATERS HOME - FLASHBACK

The same Young John from the teaser sits transfixed in front of the television as Elvis Presley performs on Ed Sullivan. John Sr. sits behind him, reads the paper.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

Christ I knew I was gay the moment I saw Elvis.

ELVIS (ON TV)

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog.

YOUNG JOHN

Damn right.

At this, John Sr. looks over the paper at his son, confused.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)

The thing is, my parents never much cared that I was gay. They never asked. They thought being gay was the best case scenario. Worst case scenario I was some kind of necrophiliac or something.

INT. PIERCE LIVING ROOM - DAY

John and Mary walk to a brightly-lit, normal-looking living room. Family pictures, pretty wallpaper on the walls. A large white box sits on the coffee table in the middle of the room.

MARY

And you'll never guess what came!

Mary removes the box's lid, reveals Klux Klux Klan robes.

JOHN  
Oh my god this is perfect.

MARY  
They really only came in one color.

Mary and John look at the outfit happily.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)  
Hold on now, don't get your dick in  
a twist. Like hell I'm a Klansman.  
No, there's another thing you  
should know about me.

John holds up an 8mm camera.

JOHN  
Well lucky for us, this only shoots  
two colors.

OLD JOHN (V.O.)  
That's right, I'm a filmmaker.