

*'The Love That Dare Not Speak Its Name'*

*OWC Challenge August 2009*

by

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FADE IN:

INT. INTERNET CAFE - DAY

JACK looks at the monitor in front of him with bewilderment.

JOE'S sits beside him. They both wear headphones, both later 20's.

Jack is fat and chubby. Three chins obscure his neck.

Joe's as thin as a rake. At school they called him 'sparrow legs'. The sight of a sparrow still irks him.

They remove their headphones.

JOE

What the hell was that?

JACK

I thought it was quite nice.

JOE

Was it bollocks. Load of gay shite.

JACK

Keep your voice down Joe. We are in public, you know.

JOE

Don't worry. They caught some lunatic fiddling with himself over there the other week. All sorts happen round here. What did you wanna hear that for anyway?

JACK

I've got write a piece on it for my creative writing class.

JOE

Good luck mate. Who wrote it?

JACK

Doesn't say. Just says provided by Norm of The DrabbleCast.

JOE

Oh he's definitely gay. I think I'd rather listen to Venom on full pelt than hear that load of gay tosh again. Even Westlife are better than that.

JACK

Don't be ridiculous. Nobody is as bad as Bloody Westlife. It wasn't gay. What was gay about it?

JOE

Oh you know, all that Queen come Layla feel about it. Then the whiny vocal at the end.

JACK

Queen weren't gay. Well, maybe Freddie, obviously.

JOE

No mate. No maybe about it. A grown man prancing around in a leotard with nail varnish and mascara in a band called 'Queen'. Straight as a die. So what you gonna write? A gay parable?

JACK

Don't be silly. Oh I dunno.

JOE

Why don't you just copy someone else's? That's what you did at school.

JACK

Piss off sparrow.

JOE

Now, let's not play the size game again. Not after the last time.

JACK

How about 'needs a bit more poke'?

JOE

I beg your pardon?

JACK

The song. Needs a bit more poke.

JOE

I'd say you'd better be a bit more creative than that. You'll get laughed outta school.

JACK

It's not school. It's college.

JOE

Diddums. Gettin' a bit touchy tetchy today.

JACK  
Come on Joe, I need help.

JOE  
Ain't that the truth.

Joe studies the email message.

JOE (CONT'D)  
I think you got it wrong fella.

Jack looks to where Joe is pointing in the message. Jack reads, the horror in his face grows as he reads on.

JACK  
Oh shit.

Joe laughs, it's very high and giddy. Almost hyena-like.

JOE  
Oh that's a good one. Good luck.  
Ira Gerswin would struggle with  
that for a task. Anybody who  
likes that song has gotta be a  
queer.

JACK  
Come on. Look, let's listen to it  
again, then go for a pint.

JOE  
Do I have to? Got any Spandau  
Ballet instead?

Jack puts his headphones back on. Joe reluctantly does so too.

EXT. BEER GARDEN - DAY

The sun blazes down.

Jack and Joe sit in the smoking area. A gentle breeze picks up ash from the overflowing ashtray in front of them.

Several empty pint pots rest nearby. A pile of screwed up paper lies near Jack's feet.

JACK  
Hic. How about 'She takes his  
hand and leads him into her  
chamber'.

JOE  
Saucy. Oh dear. I can see that  
North By Northwest tunnel  
flashing in my mind.

JACK

Thanks mate.

JOE

How's this 'Gay boys do it suited up.'

JACK

Oh stop it. What's with all this gay bashing anyway? You used to be so right on.

JOE

Funny. They say you get more right wing as you get older. It's not get bashing anyway. I'm only havin' a laugh. I always wished my dad was gay.

JACK

If your dad was gay you wouldn't be here.

JOE

Oh no. Lots of gay men have children. Like Cruise and Travolta for instance.

JACK

They're not gay!

JOE

Aren't they?

JACK

They're Scientologists...

Jack drains his glass.

JOE

I've never heard it called that before.

JACK

Why on God's green earth would you want your dad to be gay.

JOE

So then when I was at school as some kid starts picking a fight saying 'my dad's bigger than yours and your mum's arse' and all that, I could say

(adopts serious expression)

'my dad's gay. He's gonna fuck your dad'.

Jack starts laughing, despite himself.

JOE (CONT'D)  
'And your dad's gonna love it'.

Jack's laughing increases.

JACK  
That's Frankie Boyle.

JOE  
Is he gay too?

JACK  
Jesus no. That's his joke.

JOE  
Is it? I heard it down the Lamb  
last night. Good 'un.

A tall man with gelled hair and manicured nails walks past.  
The campness of his gait arches Joe's eyebrows.

JOE (CONT'D)  
And on that note...

Joe picks up his pint and drains it. He shows it Jack.

JACK  
Your round.

Joe disappears into the pub. Jack scribbles on his note  
pad. "I watch you, and wait, anticipate your return".

JACK (CONT'D)  
Hey, that's not bad.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Jack and Joe stumble over the cobbles.

JACK  
I lurve you mate. Hic!

JOE  
I fuckin' love you too bud! Arse!

Joe falls over. Jack laughs and points at him. Joe laughs  
too.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jack sits in a tatty dressing gown that has seen much  
better days. He hums as he scribbles on a pad.

Joe strolls in. Head in hands. He wears the same clothes as previous. They aren't as clean or neat as they were.

JOE  
Mother of God. What the hell happened?

JACK  
What's up with you, you puff?

He sticks his head under the tap to drink.

JACK (CONT'D)  
What are you, a zebra? Get a glass.

Joe looks a bit fearful. He reaches into a cupboard to retrieve one.

JOE  
My my. Somebody did get out of the bed on the wrong side.

JACK  
At least I made it to bed last night. You don't remember do you?

JOE  
What? We had a few drinks then we came back here?

JACK  
And what about the policemen, and the curry?

JOE  
What are you babbling on about?

Jack points at Joe's shirt. Dribbles and stains of Korma sauce spoil the front.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Oh dear.

JACK  
Oh dearie me. You're lucky that copper didn't do you.

JOE  
They're fond of that.

JACK  
Running around grunting like a pig whispering 'all coppers are twats'. Jesus Christ Joe. You gotta stay away from the top shelf man.

JOE  
 You got anything that's good for  
 a hangover?

JACK  
 Heavy drinking the night before?

EXT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jack stands in the middle of the room, a piece of paper in his hand. He now wears jeans and a T shirt displaying Batman.

Joe cues up the 'gay tune' on his iPod.

JACK  
 Some time ago that would be  
 deemed the Devil's tool.

JOE  
 In some hands it still is. Ready?

Jack clears his throat. He exercises his neck.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 For God's sake...

Jack raises his finger, then points.

The music starts. Jack swings along with melody.

Jack's voice is sweet. Endearing. Not the type of voice one would expect to emerge from this huge blurb of blubber.

At the 16 second mark he sings...

I watch you, and wait,  
 Anticipate your return

I await you, my heart yearns  
 A feeling that burns

All the things we'll do  
 And share together

A love that lasts  
 Together forever

You and me girl  
 The world is ours

The music stops. Joe switches off the player.

JACK  
 So, what did ya think?

Joe's eyebrows arch again.

JOE

It was more gay than a gay boy in  
a gay club in the Village in  
chaps...being very gay indeed.

Jack throws the piece of paper down then storms from the  
room.

JACK

I...I...

JOE

Hey. I was only joking!

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The teacher stands at the front of the small class of  
students. She's in her 30s and has a hippy look about her.

On a scale of 1 to 10, she's about a 6. At a push.

Jack is at the back. He exercises his neck.

TEACHER

Mmokay, I know this is going to  
be quite a daunting exercise so  
it's not compulsory that you sing  
to pass this section.

A sigh of relief leaves several students, others titter.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

However, would anyone like to  
volunteer?

Everybody stays absolutely still.

Jack coughs as he stands.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Wonderful Jack. Bravo! Please  
come forward.

He steps to the front of the class.

Smirks multiply around the room. Jack begins to blush.

The teacher cues up the music on a nearby laptop.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Mmokay, you ready Jack? Quieten  
down. Please!

Jack repeats his warm up and pointing routine.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Mmokay.

Teacher cues the music. Jack sways as soon the tune begins. He sings his lyrics from memory.

LATER

Stunned silence. The teacher is gobsmacked.

Jack sits back down, ample cheeks as red as beetroot.

TEACHER  
Mmokay! Thank you Jack! A round  
of applause please!

Three people clap.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Now, anyone else?

Nobody moves.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Mmokay! I'll have a go. This is  
entitled 'The Love That Dare Not  
Speak its Name'.

Sniggering multiplies.

TEACHER (CONT'D)  
Stop that. This isn't a  
kindergarden!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jack's been crying. His face is streaked with tears, puffy eyes, dribbles from his nose. He makes an enormous noise as he empties his nasal cavities into a tissue.

Joe watches this with some trepidation.

JOE  
It's alright mate. Don't worry  
about it.

JACK  
They were sniggering and  
laughing, even at the teacher.  
I'm never going back there.  
Never!

JOE  
Don't be silly, it'll be fine. I  
thought it was 'Creative Writing'  
not bloody 'American Idol'.  
Writers should be more forgiving.  
You'll forget all about it  
tomorrow.

Joe empties a wine bottle into two empty glasses. He takes a sizeable swig.

JOE (CONT'D)

But I did warn you about that gay  
song...

Jack laughs, deep and hard. Joe joins in. They look at each other, a moment passes between them.

They each move a little closer to the other.

Then...

They embrace. Their lips meet. A deep long kiss as they grip each other as if their very lives depended on it.

Joe's eye's open. He unfurls his arms.

Jack does the same. They both cough and wipe their mouths.

JOE (CONT'D)

That never happened. Right?

JACK

Right. What never happened?

FADE OUT.