

OFF THE BASE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOME - LIVING ROOM

A DOOR OPENS to a rather uniquely furnished living room. MARTHA, late 30's, brunette, steps into her home. She wipes her feet on a baseball theme floor mat. She tosses her car keys in a baseball shaped bowl.

She stops suddenly in her tracks. She hears MUSIC playing. She smiles.

She passes by large autographed posters of famous baseball players and framed photographs of her family at different ball games.

EXT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martha stands outside the door of a closed door. A POP SONG VIBRATES the door.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Martha opens the door. She stops dead in her tracks. Horror coating her face.

She looks down at her teenage son, OLIVER CORDELL, is dressed in heels, a strapless dress, a long ginger wig, and lipstick. He's frozen solid with shock and fear.

Martha explodes.

MARTHA

What the hell is going on?

Martha snatches the wig from Oliver's head revealing his ordinary shoulder-length brown hair.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

You're dressing like women now?

Martha SNATCHES on Oliver's dress. She TEARS it down the seam. Oliver grabs her hands to control her.

OLIVER

Mom stop!

MARTHA

You fag! How could you do this?

Martha claws at Oliver determined to be rid of the shame.

She snatches up the heels, wigs and make up and SLAMS them into the trash can.

Oliver tries to retrieve them but Martha fights him.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

What the hell is wrong with you?  
You're a woman now? You creep! You  
sick creep!

Martha pushes Oliver out of her way. She picks up a tube of lipstick.

Oliver's eyes pop. He reaches for it.

OLIVER

No! Please mom! Give it to me!

She tosses the tube into the trash can.

Oliver falls to his knees, his torn dress dangles off of him. The red lipstick is smudged across his face. Mascara tears run down his face.

Martha towers over him.

MARTHA

You're sick. If your father would  
have lived to see this, he'd be  
ashamed.

Martha STORMS out of the room. She SLAMS the door behind her.

Oliver crawls to the trash can. He bypasses the wigs and heels. He retrieves the tube of lipstick. He curls up on the floor cradling the lipstick. He SOBS.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Oliver walks beside his best friend LESLIE BROMOND, 16, blonde.

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Leslie pulls her hair into a ponytail.

LESLIE

Your mom still isn't talking to  
you?

Oliver shakes his head.

OLIVER

It's like she doesn't even notice me in the house at all.

LESLIE

That sucks.

OLIVER

Today we see a counselor.

Oliver stops, his eyes swelling with tears.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(voice cracking)

It's not gonna work. I just know it. She'll never accept this.

Leslie pulls him into her arms.

LESLIE

At least you're trying, that's what matters, right?

Oliver nods unable to speak.

They pull a part and continue their walk.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

I have some news that might cheer you up. There's this drag contest from L.A. asking for contestants. The top three winners are flown to L.A. to one of the greatest drag shows in the country. You should compete.

OLIVER

I dunno Leslie...

LESLIE

Come on Oliver, this will give me a chance to show off my photography skills and you a chance to get out of here away from your mom.

Oliver nods.

OLIVER

I'll think about it.

LESLIE

You better. First place winner gets a fifty grand shopping spree.

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

I want in on that. I could use some  
\$700 jeans.

The two laugh.

INT. COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Oliver and Martha sit across from each other. A WOMAN in a three-piece suit sits in the middle. She observes them both silently.

Oliver keeps his eyes to the floor. In one hand he caresses his tube of lip stick. He pulls on his dress. He tucks his heels as far under the seat as he can get them. The bangs of his blonde wig covers part of his face.

Martha's leg bounces. She looks everywhere but at Oliver, or the space around him.

MARTHA

Counselor, is this all necessary?

COUNSELOR

Yes it is. Why don't you start.  
What bothers you so much about  
Oliver's desire to dress as a  
woman?

Martha looks at the counselor and then at Oliver. Her eyes swell.

MARTHA

My family was always into sports.  
We loved Baseball most. I met my  
husband at a baseball game. Our  
first date was at a baseball game.  
He proposed to me at a baseball  
game. We spent our honeymoon  
dreaming about having boys and they  
would all play the sport they  
loved. When we had Oliver, we knew  
everything would be perfect.

Martha hops up and walk around.

MARTHA (CONT'D)

Ever since he could walk we kept a  
baseball bat in his hand. We signed  
him up for the little leagues, and  
T-Ball, then baseball. We were  
going to have more children, but my  
husband got sick and had to undergo  
chemo.

(MORE)

MARTHA (CONT'D)

After my husband died, I pushed for Oliver to play baseball. I thought it was our way of keeping his father's memory alive, but he refused. And now I know why. He wanted to be woman. Dress like a fag!

Counselor straightens.

COUNSELOR

Martha, what did we say about name calling?

Martha explodes.

MARTHA

You think I care? Look at my son! Look at what he's become.

COUNSELOR

You're only looking at the outside. He's still the same Oliver.

MARTHA

No, he's not. He's one of those fag drag queens. Grown men prancing around in make up and wigs. It's disgusting and disgraceful. My son is one of those fags now.

COUNSELOR

Martha, the name-calling isn't helping.

MARTHA

Fag! Fag! Fag! Fag!

(points into Oliver's face)

You fucking fag! That's what you are! You're no son of mine! I didn't raise no queer!

Oliver cries, horrified.

Counselor jumps up.

COUNSELOR

Okay! That's enough. I think we've had enough for today. Are you alright Oliver?

MARTHA

You're taking his side?

COUNSELOR

He is the one being attacked.

MARTHA

He deserves it. And as for you counselor, we will no longer be needing your services.

Martha storms out of the room.

Counselor pats Oliver on the shoulder.

COUNSELOR

Everything will be okay Oliver.

Oliver wipes his face and gets up to leave.

He walks past the Counselor's desk and sees her wedding photo with another woman, both in wedding gowns.

Oliver looks back at the Counselor who is obviously shaken as she writes notes on her pad.

Oliver leaves quietly.

EXT. YARD - NIGHT

Oliver takes a baseball bat to the yard tree. He growls with every WHACK. Another smack to the tree and the bat SNAPS in half. He picks up the fallen half and takes it to a small pile of other snapped bats.

He massages his bruised hands. He makes his way across the yard to a box labeled, DAD'S BATS, filled with used and worn wooden bats.

He yanks another one from box and returns to the tree. There is rage in his face as he grips the handle, pulls the bat back behind his head and lets the energy release again with each whack against the tree.

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM

Oliver settles on the edge of his bed. He gazes at his beaten red hands. He fondles his tube of lipstick in his hand. He grins remembering.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Oliver leans against the bedside holding the hand of a dying MAN.

OLIVER

Dad...

The man wears a faint smile.

A NURSE enters the room and hands Oliver's father a small package. He then hands it to Oliver.

Oliver releases his father's hand and peels open the package.

Oliver's mouth drops, he pulls out a packaged tube of lipstick.

He looks to his father who is all smiles. He reaches out his fragile hand.

Oliver falls into SOBS. He hops up and hugs his father's body.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OLIVER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Oliver wipes at his face.

He eyes a note on his calendar about the contest Leslie mentioned earlier.

His eyes harden with determination.

He hops up and snatches a duffle bag from his closet. He fills it with wigs, makeup, and clothing.

He escapes out of his window.

EXT. LESLIE'S WINDOW - NIGHT

Oliver taps on Leslie's window.

Leslie hops up.

LESLIE

Hey, what's up?

OLIVER

I want to do the contest.

Leslie beams.

LESLIE  
Let me get my camera!

INT. LESLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Leslie nails a large bedsheet to her wall. She angles a bendable desk lamp towards the sheet. She steadies her camera on her tripod.

LESLIE  
This is so exciting.

Oliver whips out his favorite lipstick and applies it. He studies himself in the mirror and laughs.

OLIVER  
What if we don't win?

LESLIE  
At least we tried.

Suddenly, the room door opens, it's Leslie's mom. She holds a small tray of cookies.

Oliver quickly stands to his feet. Leslie is frozen.

LESLIE (CONT'D)  
Mom...

Leslie's mom studies the changed room.

Oliver tries to wipe off his lipstick.

Leslie's mom sets down the tray and walks over to Oliver. She reaches out for his lipstick.

Oliver hand it to her.

She gently grabs Oliver's jaw, Oliver flinches at first but he allows it. She studies the tube.

MOM  
Ooo. Nice brand.

Oliver is too scared to respond. Leslie looks on worried.

MOM (CONT'D)  
Lipstick is expensive.

She reapplies Oliver's lipstick to his lips.

Oliver remains frozen.

MOM (CONT'D)  
Never take it off until the party  
is over. Now rub your lips  
together.

Oliver does as he's told.

MOM (CONT'D)  
Perfect.

She hands the lipstick back to him. Leslie smiles.

MOM (CONT'D)  
Enjoy the cookies... and good luck.

She leaves the room.

Oliver and Leslie exchange glances before they burst into surprised laughter.

LESLIE  
Okay, let's do this!

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Oliver rushes into the kitchen. He whips open his lunch box and scans the fridge for anything edible.

Martha gazes at him with disgust from the kitchen table.

She clears her throat.

MARTHA  
Oliver, I don't think I can handle  
this much longer. I am going to  
need you to find somewhere else to  
live.

Oliver is stunned.

MARTHA (CONT'D)  
I refuse to have this kind of  
Godless behavior in my home. I did  
not raise you to turn into a girl.  
This is not what your father would  
have wanted.

OLIVER  
You don't know what father wanted.

MARTHA

I knew him better than you and this is not what he wanted. Now you get out of my house.

OLIVER

Fine! Just don't touch my stuff until I can get it myself, if you'd be so kind.

Martha huffs.

MARTHA

Don't you worry. I wouldn't dream of tampering with your faggoty stuff.

Oliver rolls his eyes, SNATCHES up his lunch bag and leaves.

OLIVER

(under breath)  
Bitch...

INT. LESLIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Leslie and Oliver are doing homework together.

Leslie's mom enters.

MOM

Leslie, you have a letter.

Leslie hops up and takes it.

LESLIE

It's from the contest!

Oliver jumps up.

They exchange glances as she TEARS open the envelope.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Dear Oliver Cordell, I would like to congratulate you on your second place win in our Forever Beautiful Drag contest.

Oliver screams!

LESLIE (CONT'D)  
 Enclosed is your ticket to be flown  
 to Los Angeles for the opportunity  
 to perform in the biggest Drag  
 event in the country.

Leslie and Oliver scream and jump around.

LESLIE (CONT'D)  
 You won! You won!

Oliver buries his face in his hands and cry. Leslie wraps her  
 arms around him.

LESLIE (CONT'D)  
 You did it, Oliver.

Oliver uncovers his face.

OLIVER  
 We did it.

They hug each other tight.

EXT. BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Oliver strolls onto a field filled with TEEN BOYS practicing  
 their baseball pitches and batting swings.

A huge sign nearby reads, "BASEBALL TRYOUTS."

Oliver notices the boys gazing at him because of his lipstick  
 and his feminine shirt and skinny jeans. He ignores it.

He takes up a baseball bat and practices his swings.

The COACH looks him over with discomfort.

COACH  
 Hey son, you here for tryouts?

OLIVER  
 Yes sir.

COACH  
 Well, why don't you show me what  
 you got.

The boys snicker and whisper as Oliver takes the batter's  
 plate.

A fire blazes in Oliver's eyes. He grips the bat as he did  
 the night he whacked them against the tree.

A tall teen pitches the ball straight down the center.

Oliver hits the ball sending it flying far over the fence and out of sight into Neverland.

The boys are stunned to silence.

The coach whips off his hat. His jaw on the ground. He turns to Oliver.

COACH (CONT'D)

Can you do that again?

Oliver nods. He gets back into the position. The pitcher pitches another one down the center.

Oliver sends yet another one over the hills.

Oliver smiles as the boys gaze at him.

The coach comes to him grabbing his shoulder.

COACH (CONT'D)

Son, you got something special. I need that on my team, what do you say?

Oliver shakes his head.

OLIVER

Sorry coach. I can't.

Coach frowns.

COACH

But why not? Listen son, you got something worthy of the pros. If you could hit like that every time, you'd sure to get a full ride at any college.

OLIVER

I know, but I've already got plans.

COACH

Well then, why did you try out?

Oliver grins to himself.

OLIVER

To prove something. Thanks Coach.

Oliver smiles big as he exits the field leaving the boys behind him in total awe.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Oliver towers over his father's grave. He grips a weathered baseball in his hand.

He smooths his painted lips and plants a ruby kiss on the ball.

He sets the ball down at the base of the tombstone.

OLIVER  
Thanks, Dad.

Oliver breathes deep, shoves his hands in his pockets and strolls away.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Leslie and Oliver stand next to the bus as other PASSENGERS board.

LESLIE  
Well, go get em Cowgirl.

Oliver laughs.

OLIVER  
Thank you, Leslie. This wouldn't be possible without you.

LESLIE  
I know.

They laugh.

Silence falls, they're heartbroken. They hug.

OLIVER  
As soon as I am settled, I'm bringing you with me. This is our life.

Leslie nods, her eyes full of water.

LESLIE  
I know. I can't wait.

They pull apart. Oliver snatches up his bag and boards the bus.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

They wave to each other until the bus pulls away.

Oliver retrieves his lipstick from his pocket. He cradles it in his hands, looks out the window and smile.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.