

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Sunlight spills on a long oval table. HUFFING & PUFFING sound from a different room. WHIRR. WHIRR.

Someone runs on a treadmill. A SMOOTH, DEEP VOICE sounds from a pair of good speakers somewhere in the house.

It's BENDIX'S voice.

BENDIX (V.O.)

Before I get to this weeks guest, I want to ask a question. You can leave your answer in the comments.

The sound of the treadmill stops. The huffing & puffing doesn't. The voice sounds louder without the treadmill.

BENDIX (V.O.)

What the fuck is wrong with you people? It's a simple question that I really want to know the answer to.

The volume goes down.

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - BACK ROOM - DAY

A treadmill goes into sleep mode. A sweat-damp towel hangs over the handles. A door leads to the backyard.

BENDIX (V.O.)

Why - the fuck - do you red state nimrods even bother to vote? You're all straight white guys. You don't have enough of a voice?

A COFFEE GRINDER sounds.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - DAY

Bendix (50's) a bespectacled man with some seriously scruffy facial hair, sits at a table with a cup of coffee.

HUGE HEADPHONES cover his ears. He looks at a laptop. The screen shows the homepage for a podcast.

A stylized picture of his face fills the upper right corner of the screen. There are hundreds of episodes.

BENDIX (V.O.)

It's not enough that you run everything, but you have to go out and shit in everyone else's cereal?

CLICK. He presses pause and clears his throat.

BENDIX

(Different inflection)

It's not enough that you run everything, but you have to go out and shit in everyone else's cereal?

He clicks back 5 seconds.

BENDIX (V.O.)

It's not enough that you run everything, but you have to go out and shit in everyone else's cereal?

CLICK. Pause.

BENDIX

It's not enough that you ruin everything for the rest of us, but you have to go out and shit in everyone's cereal too?

He brings up a Pages document filled with notes and red highlights. He makes note of his new line-read.

CLICK. He folds the laptop closed and looks at the view. He keeps the headphones on. The world is quiet.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Bendix carries a blue bag to a recycling bin. GIL (18) a ratty looking, short Latino kid, stands across the street.

He walks a bike up the slight incline. When he see's Bendix he hops on it and plants his feet on the ground.

GIL

Sup, you old fart. Where's your soapbox today, bro?

Bendix shrugs into himself. He lowers his head and walks to the sidewalk. Gil points his bike downhill.

GIL

Yeah, keep walking -

Gill rolls forward a little.

GIL
- and suck an elephant dick.

He speeds off. Bendix keeps walking, eyes on the ground.

EXT. HIGHLAND PARK - STEEP HILL - DAY

Bendix looks out at a stunning view of the mountains. He stands at the top of a hill that belongs in San Francisco.

Damn steep. He presses earbuds into his ears and flips to a podcast app on his phone. He opens his own page.

He flips to the newest episode and checks the traffic-stats on it as he starts walking.

He presses play. A quick strain of an IRISH DITTY serves as his theme song.

The view disappears as he makes his way down the hill.

BENDIX (V.O.)
Hey guys, how's it going? I know it's been a while, but The Limerick Rake is back. Coming up I've got a great guest to dig in to like a splinter. John Train, whose spec script just sold for high six figures and lit the indie world on fire. But first, a word about underwear. You wear it. I wear it. Who doesn't wear it? Well let me tell you about MeUndies.

EXT. FIGUEROA & AVENUE 59 - DAY

Bendix stands on the corner in front of a liquor store. He holds a coffee in one hand and a to-go box in the other.

A line snakes out the door of The HP Cafe, down the block. He has his headphones in.

ANGELA (30s) a directly attractive woman with a yoga mat under her arm, walks past him and does a double take.

He doesn't notice. She circles back and tries to get his attention. He's lost in his podcast.

She talks at him. He looks up and motions at his headphones. She motions for him to take them off.

He does so.

ANGELA

- it was totally one of the best things I've ever heard. Do you live around here? I work at a gallery, right, and we'd love to have one of our artists on the show some time.

His voice is different than it is on the podcast. It's slightly higher, slower, and much quieter.

BENDIX

Oh. Um. Thanks. That sounds great but you'd really have to set something up with my agent.

She chooses not to hear anything after "that sounds great." She takes a step closer to him.

ANGELA

He's this local nut job, but he paints like a mother fucker. Maybe you read about the bench he did at the bus stop?

BENDIX

I think I heard about that.

His eyes BULGE OPEN. Gil peacocks his way down the other side of the street. Angela steps right.

Bendix steps left so she blocks him from view. Gil gives The HP Cafe the finger.

ANGELA

I think it would be great for the show, too. He's foul and cranky as hell. There's no way he wouldn't hate you. It would be hilarious.

BENDIX

Why would he hate me?

He circles around her so his back is to Gil.

ANGELA

I don't know, man. He hates everyone. Hey. I was about to grab a bite. You want to join me and I can tell you more about him?

Bendix seizes up. Hell no he doesn't want to do that. Gil lingers across the street, though.

He's loafing. Bendix nods his head.

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

The sliding door to the back porch is open. Bendix's bag sits on the table, along with his headphones.

A folded stack of literature for an art gallery pokes out of one of the bags pockets.

Bendix crosses his backyard to a huge garage.

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Bendix sits at a desk in the cramped room. It's filled with bric-a-brac and collectible junk.

All of his pod-casting equipment is turned off. He takes off his glasses to rub his eyes. His shoulders slump.

DING. A new email comes in on his phone. It takes a second before he puts his glasses back on.

He turns on the laptop.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

A slicked up Bendix waits by the closed garage door. FOOTSTEPS crunch across his backyard.

AGNES (can play 18-30 - it says so on her headshot) crosses the yard with PAULINE (40's) a short, trim woman.

Agnes wears an over-sized Christmas Sweater with an 8-bit cartoon dog on it, and jean shorts.

No makeup. Doesn't matter. She's still stunning. Bendix approaches. They meet halfway through the yard.

BENDIX

Hey, Agnes. Awesome to meet you.

AGNES

You too, you too. You guys know each other, right?

Bendix goes in for a hug with Pauline. She goes in for a handshake. It ends awkward.

BENDIX

Yeah. Paul. Good to see you again.

Agnes takes out a cigarette.

AGNES

Is it cool if I smoke first?

BENDIX

Sure, sure. We're not in any rush. We can go as long as you want and I'll edit it down later.

PAULINE

Don't mention the smoking on air.

BENDIX

Uh. OK. Sure.

AGNES

Don't pay any attention to her. She's still pissed that I gained five pounds and don't give a shit about it. She'll live.

Agnes jostles Pauline with her shoulder. Pauline rolls her eyes. She opens a NOTES APP on a tablet.

PAULINE

I made a list of no-go's.

She hands the tablet to Bendix. The screen goes dark. He swipes. It's locked. He shows Pauline.

She takes it back and unlocks it, as though there's no reason in the world Bendix shouldn't know the password.

PAULINE

Don't mention the show. That's old news. Numero Uno is - no politics.

Agnes makes a quick fart noise. Bendix glances over the rest of the list. It's extensive.

The screen locks again before he finishes reading it.

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Bendix sits behind the desk. Agnes sits across from him. Pauline sits in the corner. With headphones on.

The podcast is in full swing. Bendix's whole bearing is different. He's animated & confident. It's vaguely charming.

Agnes leans over the desk to answer a question.

AGNES

Fuck Trump. Fuck his cabinet full of goblins. I'm well aware I might piss off a few choades by saying that, but I don't have time to care. I have work to do.

Pauline pops out her earbuds.

BENDIX

You're not getting an argument from me, that's for shit sure.

Pauline snaps at Agnes and scowls. Agnes ignores her.

BENDIX

So tell me about how you got your hands on the rights to Saint Huck. It must have cost a pretty penny.

AGNES

I refinanced my mortgage. Absolutely no one thought it was a good idea, but I just have to make this film. I have to.

A LOUD THUMPING BASS sounds outside. Bendix holds up his hand to cut Agnes off.

BENDIX

Sorry. Twenty two minutes, fifteen seconds. Mark.

He clicks pause on the recording software. The thumping bass THUMPS even more.

BENDIX

Son of a bitch.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Bendix marches up his driveway. A gate blocks his view of the street. It takes a while to open.

When it does he see's Gil sitting in a parked car. He's in the drivers seat with the door open. Music BLARES.

His feet are on the street. He turns up the volume when he see's Bendix. A wicked grin crosses his lips.

Bendix doesn't say anything. He knows if he did the music would drown him out. Gil bops along to the song.

Agnes walks up to the lawn. Gil's eyes widen. He stares at her, giddy, and turns off the music.

Bendix shakes his head at Agnes.

BENDIX

Sorry. This kid lives to fuck with me. He'll get bored eventually.

Agnes waves at Gil.

GIL

Holy shit. You're Aggie Anderson. Jane Austen Takes Manhattan was the shit. For real.

AGNES

Hey. Hi. Thanks. We're actually recording a little podcast back here. Would it be cool if you kept the music down for a while?

Gil gives this some real thought. DING. A light bulb goes off in his head. He steps out of the car.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - EVENING

A beautiful, crisp night fills the sky in front of Bendix. He sits editing the newest podcast on his laptop.

He's been at it a while. He takes his glasses off and rubs his eyes. When he puts them back on he looks at his phone.

He swipes open a photo-sharing app and clicks over to Agnes's page. The newest picture is of her and Gil.

The caption reads "Neighborhood pal." Bendix TUTS at it and clicks on the link to Gil's page.

It's an obtuse page for a kid. Lots of stills from old movies and quotes from long dead authors.

Stand Up comedians are a recurring theme. He has some stills and some shots from shows he must have been at himself.

There's a video of Bendix doing stand up. The caption is filled with hyper-positive hashtags. Bendix is surprised.

There are a lot of pictures. He looks through all of them.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Bendix carries a recycling bag to the appropriate bin. He hears a faint SNIFFLE across the street.

He looks. Gil sits on the curb. He rubs his nose on his sleeve and looks at the ground.

Bendix approaches the sidewalk.

BENDIX

Hey.

Gil knows he's there but doesn't look up. Bendix sits on the curb. They face each other across the street.

BENDIX

Did you really watch Jane Austen
Takes Manhattan?

GIL

Shit yeah. It took a while to hit its
stride, but once Aggie got going -
damn, bro. By the end she was getting
up in to Lucille Ball territory.
Comedy wise.

BENDIX

Huh.

GIL

What, you don't think a kid like me
would be into that shit?

BENDIX

I didn't really think anyone was in
to that network sitcom shit anymore.

Gil wipes his eyes.

BENDIX

You OK?

Gil wants to be an asshole but he's too upset.

GIL

Fuckin' - I got suspended and my dad was loaded when he heard about it and he told me he wants me to stay with my mom now and she's mean in a totally fuckin' weird way. Shit's just really messed up right now, man.

He puts his head in his hand and gulps air to stop from crying. Bendix shuffles his feet.

He lets Gil get control of himself for a second.

BENDIX

Why'd you get suspended?

GIL

(Teenage Brazen)

I got too much to say.

Gil hardens his posture. The tears are gulped away.

GIL

Fuck you, man. You don't care. All you care about is yelling about shit that doesn't even affect you. You're a total dick now.

The front door behind Gil BANGS OPEN. An angry voice BOOMS.

ANGRY VOICE (O.C.)

Gilberto, if you don't get back inside right this second, I'm going to lose more than just my patience. You hear me, boy?

Bendix doesn't move. He doesn't want to embarrass Gil by letting on that he heard the Angry Voice.

He looks at the ground. Gil gets up.

GIL

You used to be funny, man.

Gil STOMPS up the steps to his house. The sound of someone CUFFING HIM ON THE BACK OF THE HEAD sounds.

EXT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - BACK PORCH - MORNING

Bendix looks at his view over a steaming cup of coffee. One hand holds his phone in front of his face.

He watches the thirty second long video of his stand-up routine on Gil's photo-sharing page.

He looks over his shoulder.

INT. BENDIX'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Bendix sets up everything he needs to record his podcast. He arranges the apps on his laptop just so.

He tilts the microphone and makes sure his coffee cup is right at hand. He adjusts his headphones.

CLICK. He presses record and looks up. Gil sits across the desk from him. He adjusts his own headphones.

Bendix opens his mouth to speak.

CUT TO BLACK: