

Testing Positive

"Pilot"

By Jackson Reilly & Ella Talmadge

JacksonLReilly@gmail.com  
404-747-1413  
Ella.G.Talmadge@gmail.com  
404-747-9768

TEASER

EXT. HARDEN UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY [TALKING HEADS]

WE SEE a series of STUDENTS answering a personal question directly into the camera:

PONYTAIL

"What does sex mean to me?"

CUT TO:

LETTERMAN JACKET

Like, getting laid.

CUT TO:

BRACES

Hookin' up.

CUT TO:

BRIT

Um...shagging.

CUT TO:

COMP SCI

Fornication?

CUT TO:

MORMON

It's called *making* love.

CUT TO:

Two LULULEMON BADDIES answer together, giggling:

ZETA BETA THETA 1

Boinking!

ZETA BETA THETA 2

Ew-uh gross! Who calls it that?

CUT TO:

PHILOSOPHY STONER

Doin' it, man.

CUT TO:

TOUR GUIDE

Sex!

CUT TO:

ARTSY

It's just so freeing. Nothing but  
your bodies and the paint.

CUT TO:

FRAT BRO

Protection? What? Like a helmet?

CUT TO:

ZETA BETA THETA 2

It's called the 'Eiffel tower'. I'm  
not gonna explain it but let's just  
say engineering majors are very  
thorough.

ZETA BETA THETA 1

OMIGOD SARAH!

CUT TO:

PHILOSOPHY STONER

--merely a construct. A physical  
manifestation of our intrinsic--

CUT TO:

TOUR GUIDE gestures lewdly. Whatever he says can't be legal.

TOUR GUIDE

[BLEEEP BLEEP] but then you  
[BLEEEEEEP] and when you turn around  
[BLEEP BLEEP] but get some eye-  
protection because--

CUT TO:

The camera finally reveals the INTERVIEWERS - two haunted  
PSYCH STUDENTS wearing lab coats.

PSYCH STUDENT

You get all that?

PSYCH STUDENT #2 nods slowly, holding a CAMCORDER.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. HARDEN PARKING LOT - MORNING

An EXPENSIVE CAR peels in and parks before a SIGN that reads:  
*FACULTY PARKING.*

DR. LIONEL MACK (40), hunky new professor, quickly steps out of the driver's seat, COFFEE in hand, and opens his trunk.

It's filled with cardboard boxes. He grabs a messenger bag and an open box of books and spills the coffee on his pants.

MACK

Smooth.

He reaches into another box and grabs EXTRA PANTS, checks his watch, and slams the trunk.

INT. MACK'S OFFICE - MORNING

Mack enters and sees an old, small, cramped room with one desk in the middle with an INTERCOM SYSTEM on top.

He drops the box of books onto the desk and a plume of dust kicks up.

Each book has his name on it: *SEXUALITY AND MASCULINITY. BEDROOM BATTLES. WHY YOUR PARTNER IS SUDDENLY INTO FEET.*

He unboxes awards and degrees, all that say *LIONEL MACK.*

Mack raises the blinds to a singular window to find it is one foot away from a brick wall.

MACK

I feel so welcome.

He begins to change his pants when --

KNOCK KNOCK. The door swings open and a young woman, WINSTEAD'S ASSISTANT (30) walks in.

WINSTEAD'S ASSISTANT

Dr. Mack is your intercom not working? The Dean is ready-  
OHMYGOSH!

Mack scrambles to pull his pants up. Winstead's Assistant hides her face in embarrassment.

MACK

Thank you, I'll be right there.

Winstead's Assistant shuffles out and closes the door behind her.

Mack places his hands on his hips and sighs, and his pants fall down again.

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - MORNING

DEAN TODD WINSTEAD (40), balding, gruff, and annoyed, sips his coffee.

Mack barges in.

MACK

Todd! Long time no see! How long's it been?

Winstead is startled and spills coffee on his shirt.

WINSTEAD

Sixteen years. Have a seat.

Mack sits in the chair opposite Winstead and looks around.

MACK

Nice office! Mine is really...

WINSTEAD

Not what you're used to?

MACK

I was gonna say homely.

WINSTEAD

The last psych professor died in it.

MACK

Are you joking?

WINSTEAD

Of course. He had his stroke in it, he died in the ambulance.

Mack stares.

WINSTEAD (CONT'D)

I wanted to give you the ground rules for your stay here. I don't imagine you'll be in Dixon long.

MACK  
(chuckling)  
Is that a threat?

WINSTEAD  
An assumption. I know why you're here. I know why you were kicked from the Kinsey Institute. What I don't know is how you managed to trick the board into giving you this position.

MACK  
Look Todd-

WINSTEAD  
Winstead.

MACK  
Look Winstead-

WINSTEAD  
Dean. Winstead.

MACK  
Look! Dean. Winstead. Harden University is...

He struggles for a polite word.

WINSTEAD  
Harden University is...

MACK  
...Not my first choice. But I'm here and I'm going to do my job.

WINSTEAD  
Let's hope you do it well.

Mack shrinks back in his seat.

WINSTEAD (CONT'D)  
The reason I asked you to come in was to tell you your limitations. I know you like to "play outside the rules" so let me be frank.

CUT TO:

INT. MACK'S OFFICE - DAY

Mack is studying up and taking notes. On his desk sits a pile of books about sex psychology. *The Intimate Journey. The G-Spot and Other Discoveries. The Mating Mind. Come Together.*

WINSTEAD (V.O.)  
You will teach your lecture as the course dictates. You have some leeway but you have to hit the major beats.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - DAY

Mack makes his way to class.

WINSTEAD (V.O.)  
You can choose what to study in your lab, but it'll have to be run by me first. I get final say.

Mack turns a corner and SEES SOMEONE.

WINSTEAD (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And one more thing to really spite you: No workplace relations.

Mack smiles at BRANDI MILLER (38), another professor, sharp and effortlessly polished in a tailored lab coat. She gives him an appraising glance as she passes.

WINSTEAD (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Is that clear, Lionel?

CUT BACK TO:

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mack snaps back to reality.

MACK  
Don't worry, *Todd*. You're not my type.

Winstead seethes.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Mack walks into the classroom to find 100 STUDENTS waiting. He places his CURRICULUM on a desk. Mack checks his watch and smiles.

MACK

Sorry everyone, first day jitters.

Mack grabs a marker and writes on the whiteboard. "S E X".

Whispers erupt. Some kids shift uncomfortably in their seats.  
A few smirk.

SOMEONE IN THE BACK (O.S.)

Hell, yeah!

MACK

Sex. It's what got you here--  
literally. Why any of us are here.  
It's the single most inescapable  
force of human nature. It builds  
empires, topples governments,  
destroys careers. It's why you sent  
that text to your ex last night at  
2 am.

A smatter of light chuckles.

MACK (CONT'D)

My name is Dr. Mack. And some of  
you are probably confused right now  
because this is supposed to be  
special topics in psychology.

(checks his clipboard)

"Learning and Memory Processes".  
But that is not what we will be  
covering.

(beat)

This class will instead focus on  
sex psychology as that is my area  
of expertise, and that is what I'd  
like to teach you.

A few students scratch their heads and necks.

MACK (CONT'D)

Despite the fact that we all think  
about sex, want it, avoid it, God  
forbid we actually talk about it!  
We laugh it off. Make up ridiculous  
euphemisms -- boning, getting lucky  
-- so we don't have to acknowledge  
what it actually is: Connection.

LIZ (20), the INTERVIEWER from the teaser, sits at attention  
in the front row, pen in hand. She is sharp, earnest, and  
challenging.



MACK (CONT'D)

Because that's sex at it's core.  
Connection. Psychological,  
emotional, and biological. We are  
going to be learning not just about  
sex but why we do it, how we think  
about it, what it says about us as  
people. This class is about  
intimacy, power, love, loneliness.

He caps the marker and tosses it onto the podium with a  
satisfying clack.

MACK (CONT'D)

Welcome to Psych 3200.

Liz raises her hand.

LIZ

Professor, Dr. Goodwin, rest his  
soul, outlined the original course  
extensively, but we're just hearing  
about this change now. Do you have  
an outline prepared, or a reading  
list?

He looks away.

MACK

An excellent question. I'd dive in  
now, but I thought I'd take it  
extra easy on you guys this first  
class. That reminds me, I would  
also like to see you all joining my  
lab. The acceptance pool will be  
small. I need the best you've got  
to offer and I'm expecting it.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - LATER

As Mack exits his classroom, MILLER catches him.

MILLER

Apologies. I thought you'd have  
cleared out by now.

MACK

Oh, I'm sorry. Started a little  
late, had to linger.

MILLER  
So, you blocking my entrance is  
just for today? Or is this going to  
be a regular occurrence?

MACK  
Next time I'll have flowers.

Miller chuckles.

MACK (CONT'D)  
So, what department do you teach?

MILLER  
Biochemistry. And neuroscience.

MACK  
So nothing too complicated.

MILLER  
Well, what is it that you teach.

MACK  
Sex psychology. Very important,  
extremely difficult to learn.

MILLER  
Maybe you're not a very good  
teacher.

MACK  
I'd like to think I'm a great one.

MILLER  
You think that highly of yourself?

MACK  
One has to when you study ego. My  
name's Lionel. I'm... new in town.

MILLER  
Dr. Miller, and I'll see you  
around.

Miller exits.

MACK  
(to himself)  
Take it in stride.

INT. MACK'S LAB - LATER

FIVE STUDENTS turned out. Liz, the girl from class, sits chatting with CUB (19), the other INTERVIEWER and who looks like he's never been outside of Dixon. Cub laughs nervously at something she's said.

MACK

You've got to be fucking joking.

ADA (22), a beautiful blonde whistles, picking at her nails with a pocket knife. AGNES (22), Ada's twin, blows a bubble with gum.

POP!

LIZ

I'm sorry, professor?

MACK

I said, who's ready to get things cooking?

Liz and the other students turn to him.

MACK (CONT'D)

I guess since you all are the only ones to have turned up, you've passed the vetting phase. Congratulations. You are now my lab assistants. Throw that on your resume.

Liz turns to SEBASTIAN (19) to her left, a pompous wannabe Casanova, checking out the twins.

LIZ

I think we should still be interviewed.

MACK

Umm. Okay, what's your name? Why are you here?

LIZ

Liz. Liz Neumann. And because you're my only option for research after the last professor croaked.

(beat)

Rest his soul.

She turns to Cub.

CUB

I'm Cub. I just need the credits.

Agnes nods, speaking with a German lilt.

AGNES

I'm Agnes. That's Ada. We thought it'd be an easy "A."

SEBASTIAN

Well, I'm Sebastian, and I'm not here to clown around. I'm making sure I'm the best me that I can be for the ladies.

Everyone rolls their eyes.

MACK

Alright, really eye-opening stuff you guys. I was expecting more students, so let's break, and I'll have some structure next time. See you in lecture tomorrow.

LIZ

Wow, preparedness is really your thing.

EXT. HARDEN PARKING LOT - MORNING

Mack walks toward the psych building but notices no one around. It's a ghost town. A plastic bag tumbleweeds by.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mack walks to his office, checks his watch, and jumps.

MACK

God damnit. Late two days in a row. That's it. I'm selling this thing.

He hurries down the hall.

INT. LECTURE HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Mack barges in to see... Liz and a couple other students.

MACK

Quiet today, isn't it?

Mack walks up to Liz.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Hey, is it like a holiday or something?

LIZ  
I think something's going around.  
My roommate was sick this morning.

Mack walks to the podium, but then glances back to the room.

MACK  
You know what? Class dismissed.

LIZ  
What? You're canceling?

MACK  
Well, my lecture was... too important to not teach with everyone here. We'll regroup tomorrow.

Liz glares and leaves.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - LATER

Mack walks towards his office when he hears VOICES grow louder and louder.

He turns a corner to see a LONG LINE OF STUDENTS in the hallway, wrapping around the corner.

MACK  
Shit.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Mack walks up to the first STUDENT in line.

MACK

My classroom is actually down the hall.

STUDENT #1

I'm not in your class.

MACK

Oh... May I ask what this is about?

STUDENT #1

Are you the sex professor?

MACK

I'm sorry?

STUDENT #1

I was told you were the sex professor.

MACK

By whom?

STUDENT #1

Umm. I heard it from my roommate, and I think they heard it from some kid, Seth?

Another STUDENT chimes in.

STUDENT #2

Seb. Sebastian.

MACK

Sebastian? Oh. Ohhh. God damnit, Sebastian.

STUDENT #1

So like, is this confessional rules?

MACK

One sec.

Mack stands back and addresses the line.

MACK (CONT'D)

Who here is actually in my class?

A couple of students RAISE THEIR HANDS.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Who is here to talk about personal  
matters?

EVERYONE raises their hand. Mack smirks.

MACK (CONT'D)  
Okay. I get it. I'd want my advice.  
(to Student #1)  
Let's throw you on the assembly  
line.

INT. MACK'S OFFICE - DAY

Mack sits across from Student #1, winds an EGG TIMER on the  
desk, and pulls out a VOICE RECORDER.

MACK  
Okay, we don't have a lot of time.  
I can't make you a master but I can  
give you some tips. Three minutes.  
Go.

STUDENT #1  
Oh, um... Well me and my girlfriend  
started having... sex, and --

MACK  
And you're not sure how you feel  
about it?

STUDENT #1  
No, no, it's just, I started, um...

MACK  
Look can you just cut to what you  
need advice on?

STUDENT #1  
I don't need advice.

MACK  
Then why are you here?

STUDENT #1  
Cause I've got a rash!

MACK  
Again, then why are you here? Why  
don't you go to the health center?

STUDENT #1

Because you need insurance! I can't have my parents finding out about this!

MACK

You're in college, I'm sure they would understand.

STUDENT #1

You don't know my parents.

MACK

Hold on. I am not a doctor. I mean, I'm not a *medical* doctor. I'm a psychologist.

WE SEE Mack talk to a SERIES of STUDENTS.

CUT TO:

STUDENT #2

So this isn't confidential?

MACK

No, it is. But I can't diagnose you with anything, I can't give you medicine. I can only tell you what you might have and give you advice, which would be: go to the health center.

CUT TO:

STUDENT #3

Are you kidding?! I'm on my parents' insurance!

MACK

So I've heard.

CUT TO:

STUDENT #4

It just really hurts to pee. Like fire, man.

Mack pulls out a notepad and pen.

CUT TO:



STUDENT #5  
And the sore just keeps getting bigger...

CUT TO:

STUDENT #6  
I thought it was razor burn... but the bumps are *multiplying*!

CUT TO:

STUDENT #7  
I went to the clinic but I didn't test positive for anything, even though I've got all these symptoms.

MACK  
Interesting.

STUDENT #7  
That doesn't exactly inspire confidence.

MACK  
Well, I think you have an STI, but I'm not certain of which one.

STUDENT #7  
Thanks a lot "professor."

CUT TO:

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Winstead giggles at his desk. Winstead's Assistant whispers in his ear.

Mack BARGES IN, taking them both by surprise. Winstead YELPS.

WINSTEAD  
Nothing!

She takes off past Mack.

MACK  
Winstead, we have an outbreak!

WINSTEAD  
Mack, what the hell?!

MACK

There's something going around--an STI, but all of the data I have so far implies that it's something new. Similar to chlamydia or gonorrhea but not quite. It's happening right here, and I'll need to do further research--

WINSTEAD

Further research? If kids are sick, send them to the health center.

Mack stops in his tracks.

MACK

Well. I did but I thought my lab could cover this.

WINSTEAD

Your lab is for curriculum. You're allowed to consider different subjects but it was still under a strict regiment. You're an instructor first, that's your responsibility. Don't touch this, do I make myself clear?

Mack is silent for a long moment. Then suddenly--

MACK

Yes, sir.

INT. MACK'S LAB - LATER

Mack and the lab assistants stand in a circle.

MACK

Alright, change of plans. There's an STI going around campus. I believe that it's something new. Your assignment for today is to canvas for people being affected by these symptoms.

He passes them folders.

MACK (CONT'D)

We are looking for volunteers. We'll need blood work done first to prove this hypothesis, and then we'll go from there.

Liz flips through the papers skeptically.

LIZ  
How are we doing the bloodwork?

SEBASTIAN  
And who's going to want to do this?

MACK  
You can flirt but you can't pitch?  
And I've got someone covering the  
bloodwork. Now go off, carpe diem  
and whatnot.

Sebastian blushes and heads out with his assignment. The others follow.

INT. MILLER'S OFFICE - LATER

Miller grades papers on her desk. KNOCK KNOCK!

MILLER  
Yes?

Mack opens the door.

MACK  
Time to talk?

MILLER  
I've got a couple minutes but-

MACK  
Great! Let's go for a walk.

EXT. HARDEN UNIVERSITY QUAD - LATER

Mack and Miller walk around the campus.

MILLER  
How sure are you about this?

MACK  
Well, I'll be a lot more sure if we  
could get some bloodwork done.

MILLER  
And you have volunteers?

MACK  
In progress as we speak.

MILLER

Winstead is giving you the go ahead  
on all of this?

MACK

Wouldn't do it without Todd's  
blessing, we go way back.

MILLER

I don't know, I don't have a lot of  
time to put aside for this.

MACK

Well let me ask you something. Why  
are you here?

MILLER

You asked me to walk with you.

MACK

Why are you at Harden? You're  
teaching subjects that don't come  
lightly, you have to be extremely  
smart, so why here?

MILLER

I got an offer. My boyfriend lives  
here in Dixon. It was perfect at  
the time.

MACK

Boyfriend?

MILLER

It's very serious.

MACK

At the time.

MILLER

What?

MACK

You just said it was perfect at the  
time.

MILLER

It was. It is.

MACK

Well I'm hearing that you were  
unlucky, but look, this is the end  
of the rainbow right here.

MILLER

The rainbow.

MACK

I need your help with this, and if it turns out the way I think it will, our research, with *both* of our names right on the front, will skyrocket us right on out of here. But all of that needs to start with some measly bloodwork.

MILLER

You, the *great* Lionel Mack, are agreeing to co-author it?

MACK

Wouldn't have it any other way. Partners?

He stops walking and extends his hand. She looks at it, mulling it over.

MILLER

I wouldn't mind a little prestige.

They shake hands, before continuing through the quad.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. HARDEN UNIVERSITY QUAD - LATER

Liz and Cub poll STUDENTS on the green. Sebastian, Ada, and Agnes do the same in the background.

SEBASTIAN

--but talking to girls is like  
fishing, you have to reel them in.

Agnes and Ada nod intently, sharing a look.

A STUDENT blows Liz and Cub off.

CUB

So why are you doing this?

LIZ

It's what he asked us to do.

CUB

Like, this in general. Why the lab,  
psychology?

LIZ

I like research. It's fascinating.  
But unfortunately for me, the only  
teacher we've here got is this sex-  
crazed weirdo.

(beat)

Why are you here?

CUB

Honestly, wasn't super invested  
until today. Seems like fun.

LIZ

Asking students to talk about their  
sex lives?

CUB

Discovering a new disease. If we're  
on the ground floor maybe we get  
some money.

A SHY GIRL approaches them.

SHY GIRL

(whispered)

Are you guys the... *sex people*?

CUB

Yes! Yes, we are the sex people.

LIZ

We're looking for volunteers for bloodwork to learn more about the STI.

SHY GIRL

Is it anonymous?

LIZ

Of course.

SHY GIRL

Is it compensated?

Cub and Liz look at each other and grimace.

INT. MACK'S OFFICE - LATER

The phone connected to the intercom RINGS. Mack picks it up and dust BLOWS INTO HIS FACE.

MACK

Hello?

(coughing)

Okay, you've got someone? Great, run them over to Dr. Miller's office, she'll take over from there. Great work, Liz.

Mack hangs up the phone in delight and --

The door FLIES OPEN and Winstead enters, fuming.

MACK (CONT'D)

Todd, lovely to see you, come on in--

WINSTEAD

Do you think I'm a moron, Lionel?

MACK

(beat)

...um...no.

WINSTEAD

You sent your lab assistants to dig DEEPER into the very thing I TOLD YOU *EXPLICITLY* TO DROP.

MACK

Hold on-

WINSTEAD

No, I won't hold on! It's only your first week and you're already insubordinate. I knew giving you this job was a bad idea.

MACK

Hold on! If you let me get this done I can leave! If we do the research it's more than enough to get me another book deal--

WINSTEAD

I'm sure you would love that.

(beat)

Unfortunately Mack, I know you. You cut corners, you go over people's heads, you violate protocol. Your reputation might already be ruined, but I will not let you ruin this school's.

MACK

Did you practice that speech in the mirror?

WINSTEAD

Test me again, and it's your ass.

Winstead exits and Liz enters shyly. Winstead glares at her.

MACK

Fuck.

INT. MACK'S LAB - LATER

Mack leans on his desk in front of Liz, Cub, Sebastian, and the Twins.

CUB

So, are we going to get expelled?

MACK

No. No, I'm in trouble. You guys aren't really accessories to my crime, it's more like... I kidnapped you. Free of guilt.



LIZ

One professor dies, the next gets  
canned within a week. If we're  
lucky, someone lasts the month.

SEBASTIAN

Why are you bummed? No offense, but  
like, why are you teaching this  
stuff, anyway? You don't really  
seem to be in it for the chicks.

Agnes SMACKS him upside the head.

ADA

We're Pavlov-ing him every time he  
says something stupid.

Mack takes a deep breath.

MACK

Well, I grew up here in Dixon.  
Small town, small minds. I grew up  
around sick people and teen  
pregnancies. I had cousins who  
didn't get treatments they needed,  
friends who didn't know their  
options--some who never got the  
chance to figure stuff out. Sex  
education was completely absent, so  
I saw its importance. I just  
couldn't understand *why*. Why  
something so universal, so human,  
was treated like a dirty secret. I  
thought I could change that.

LIZ

But you didn't come back.

MACK

...No. I didn't.

(beat)

I gained prestige, and acclaim in  
my field. I wanted to help people  
on a bigger scale. But the  
regulations started to take too  
long. I got impatient, and I  
suffered the consequences. This was  
my chance to get back, but I can't  
have it be at your expense.

The room is silent.

CUB

I was a teen pregnancy.

SEBASTIAN

Ew!

Sebastian gets hit upside the head. Liz listens intently.

CUB

But, it felt nice to think I was helping somehow. My mom had me when she was pretty young. I never knew my dad. I love my mom, and I know she loves me, but I know how hard it was for her. I know she had to put her life on hold, and that she wasn't ever able to leave. Not saying I don't want to be around or like I wish I could've helped her or whatever, I just--I know how alone she felt.

Now everyone is sharing.

ADA

I mean we're twins. We've been sexualized our whole lives.

SEBASTIAN

I'm...

Agnes raises her hand to strike, then--

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Oh my god. I'm a virgin!

Everyone rolls their eyes.

LIZ

You say you want to help people, want to teach us, but it sounds like you just want another book deal. You're too arrogant to care about this for the right reasons, but if you're not trying to study this virus, who is?

Mack stares at her.

MACK

No one, I suppose. Thank you all for your... well your vulnerability.

SEBASTIAN

No problem, teach.

Mack exits, dejected.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mack stands outside his lab and sighs. He pulls out the voice recorder.

MACK

Fuck it.

Mack storms off.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. WINSTEAD'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Mack walks up to the assistant's desk: empty. He hears SNICKERING on the other side of Winstead's office door.

KNOCK! KNOCK!

WINSTEAD (O.S.)  
(muffled)  
Umm, just a moment!

Mack leans against the door and hears shuffling. THUD!

WINSTEAD (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(muffled)  
OW! Um, come in.

Mack enters.

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mack walks towards the desk.

WINSTEAD  
Oh, it's you. Come to grovel,  
Lionel?

MACK  
Actually, yes.

Winstead smirks.

WINSTEAD  
I'm sorry?

MACK  
I'm here to grovel. I'm here to  
tell you that you're a ridiculous,  
pompous ass for burying this. It's  
an epidemic.

WINSTEAD  
I don't think you know what grovel  
means.

MACK  
I do, but I wanted to call you a  
pompous ass before I groveled.  
(MORE)

MACK (CONT'D)

*People are sick, and you can't ignore the problem just because you have an unjustified gripe with me--*

WINSTEAD

Unjustified?!

MACK

You know it too! I think you know that it's stupid to deny these kids help, and you must feel some moral dilemma about it. So please, forget our past, forget what I'd gain, and let's do right by this school and help squash this thing!

(beat)

Well? That last bit counted as groveling, right?

WINSTEAD

No.

MACK

No, it didn't?

WINSTEAD

No, I won't let you.

MACK

Come on! You're being totally unreasonable!

WINSTEAD

I don't care about the moral argument. I don't care about forgiveness. I Don't. Like. You. In fact, I despise you. You don't even seem to acknowledge why, but the fact is, you are the reason I turned out to be some backwater dean of a school that has only one psychology professor!

MACK

Okay, but--

WINSTEAD

I will never help you and I'd rather upend your life than help some snot-nosed sexual deviants that can't keep it in their pants!

Mack shrugs.

MACK

Okay, but if you don't help me I'll go public.

WINSTEAD

Public with what?

MACK

Your own personal Nixon tapes.

Mack reveals his voice recorder, BLINKING.

MACK (CONT'D)

I've got you saying some gnarly shit on top of flat out denying kids access to help. For a guy who cares so much about *reputation*, that's gotta hurt.

WINSTEAD

Are you trying to say you're blackmailing me?

MACK

I'm not trying to say it, I think I'm in the process of actively doing so.

(beat)

And it doesn't help that your assistant's naked in the closet.

Winstead's Assistant FALLS OUT of the closet HALF-NAKED.

MACK (CONT'D)

Oh! Oh oh oh!

WINSTEAD

This is not what it looks like.

MACK

Oh it's not?

(into the recorder)

It looks like *YOUR* assistant just fell out of *YOUR* closet half-fucking-naked!

WINSTEAD

Jesus Christ.

MACK

How's that for an educated guess?!

WINSTEAD

You will not speak of this.

WINSTEAD'S ASSISTANT

Can I go?

WINSTEAD

Good lord, yes, please leave.

Winstead's Assistant leaves holding her shoes. Winstead holds his head in his hands.

MACK

Let me go about my business, let me study this thing, and I won't spill about your choice words regarding our beloved students.

WINSTEAD

Good God, will you quit your incessant yammering!

Mack grins.

WINSTEAD (CONT'D)

Fine. Have your little sex squad. I don't care.

MACK

Perfect, I'll let you know when we get the blood work back.

WINSTEAD

Blood work? What blood work?

Mack winces.

MACK

Nothing, sorry. Inside joke, I'll go now. I'll leave you to your... meeting.

WINSTEAD

Get out, right now.

MACK

On it.

Mack exits triumphantly.

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Mack skips down the hall, until--

Miller turns a corner unexpectedly, furious.

MILLER

Who the HELL do you think you are?  
Liz told me everything, you--you...  
CRETIN!

Miller jabs at him. Mack raises his hands.

MILLER (CONT'D)

You could've gotten me fired! You  
lied to me and manipulated me!  
What's wrong with you?! I'm on my  
way to Winstead right now!

MACK

Woah, wait, wait! I just talked to  
Winstead. It's all settled.

MILLER

Why would I believe you? You're a  
goddamn grifter!

MACK

If you don't believe me, go talk  
with him yourself. Just check the  
closet first.

Miller stops and crosses her arms.

MACK (CONT'D)

I just had a long chat with him.  
We're moving forward with the  
project. He doesn't even know you  
were involved. I'm sorry I lied to  
you, that was wrong of me.

MILLER

Seems to be a running theme.

MACK

You don't have to send in the blood  
tests, I can get them another way.  
I won't rope you into this anymore  
than I already have.

MILLER

I already sent them in.

MACK

You did?

MILLER

Yeah.

(beat)

(MORE)



MILLER (CONT'D)  
The preliminary results look...  
promising.

MACK  
Really? So you're game?

MILLER  
You think I'd let you get this  
published by yourself? We're  
*partners*.

MACK  
Fantastic.

MILLER  
But I have some ground rules:

CUT TO:

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - SAME

Winstead, still fuming, types on his computer in the dark.

MILLER (CONT.) (V.O.)  
My name goes first. Brandi Miller  
then Lionel Mack.

MACK (V.O.)  
Brandi?

Winstead stops and shifts in his chair, fidgeting.

MILLER (V.O.)  
Don't laugh. Second: No more lies.  
If I am your partner in this, I  
deserve your trust.

MACK (V.O.)  
Done.

Winstead clicks his intercom.

WINSTEAD  
Will you check for recent bloodwork  
requests sent out from our  
department? We need to find out who  
is doing Mack's dirty work.

WINSTEAD'S ASSISTANT (V.O.)  
(over intercom)  
Right away, sir.

BACK TO:

INT. HARDEN HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Miller stands by Mack and jabs at him.

MILLER

Third: You're gonna tell me  
everything about you and Winstead.

MACK

What? Why?

MILLER

You guys act so strange. Did you  
use to date?

MACK

Oh my god! What?! No!

INT. WINSTEAD'S OFFICE - SAME

Winstead YELPS, leaps out of his chair, and runs into his  
bathroom. The intercom lights up again.

WINSTEAD'S ASSISTANT (V.O.)

(over intercom)

Sir, I have one name here from  
today: Dr. Brandi Miller.

(beat)

Sir? Sir, are you there?

WE SEE the bathroom door. WE HEAR urine trickling.

WINSTEAD (O.S.)

AHHHHH! It burns like fire!

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF PILOT