

BREAKFAST WITH GOD
(EPISODE #2)

Written by
Troy Battles

troybattles@yahoo.com

INT. TEEPEE - DAY

Peter enters the teepee and is immediately hit with a waft of smoke from the giant bong Skip has been tending.

Skip hands the bong to Peter. Peter politely refuses.

SKIP
What's the matter -- no
prescription?

Peter looks a bit nervous as he adjusts to the low light.

Malone busies herself with tidying up, avoiding eye contact with Peter.

PETER
Hey, not before dinner, right?

SKIP
Whatever, man. What brings
you here?

Skip torches off the contents off the bowl.

PETER
I want to see your equipment.

Skip does choke-take.

SKIP
Beg your pardon?

PETER
I want to see your camera.

SKIP
Ah, I take it your delivery
job didn't work out.

Skip laughs boisterously at Peter's misfortune as he exhales a cloud of smoke.

EXT. VENICE CANAL AREA - HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter's car pulls up to a well-maintained residence.

Peter is apprehensive. He looks to Skip for assurance, but can't read him.

PETER
I thought you said your
equipment was in storage.

SKIP
It is. In that garage.

The pair get out of the car and approach the house in a stealth-like manner.

A nervous Peter keeps an eye open in all directions.

Skip uses a phone card to open the gate, then climbs in the garage side window, adding to Peter's concern.

Skip jumps inside, and in a moment opens the side door for Peter to come inside.

PETER
Who's house is this?! I don't need to go to jail.

SKIP
Relax. Show a little faith.

Skip turns on the light, and the contents of the garage are revealed.

C-stands, frames, flags, filters, cables, and various pieces of production equipment are neatly contained in nearly every section of the garage.

Peter wears an awed look on his face.

Skip pulls on a huge silver cargo box until he has space enough to open it up.

He expertly flips the latches and removes the top to reveal a pristine condition, fully accessorized Arriflex Super16BL motion picture camera, complete with video tap.

Peter is nearly giddy. He quickly regains his composure as headlights illuminate the front of the garage, then quickly loses it again.

Skip disappears behind a stack of equipment. Peter has no place to hide as the sound of footsteps approach.

Peter freezes as the door to the garage opens, helpless.

An older man enters and appears shocked to see Peter standing alone in the middle of all the equipment.

From behind the man, Skip emerges. Peter's eyes go wide as he fears what is about to happen next.

Skip grabs the old man from behind, and rocks him side to side.

A woman enters the garage and calmly puts a grocery bag on the counter.

WOMAN
Skip, let go of your father.

These are Skip's now conservative hippy parents, LARRY (62) and MAGGIE (62).

Peter looks as though he's just peed himself out of relief.

PETER
I'm sorry. I'm Skip's friend Peter.

LARRY
Larry. My wife Maggie.

MAGGIE
Why don't we take this shindig into the house?

IN THE MAIN HOUSE LIVING ROOM

Peter sits in the overstuffed couch, as Larry lights his pipe from his recliner.

Maggie enters the room with four orange juice bottles, cups and ice.

LARRY
How long have you known my son?

PETER
We met just this morning.

SKIP
He wants to be a director.

Larry smirfs.

MAGGIE
(to Skip)
How is Malone, dear?

SKIP
Fine.

LARRY
Are you still living in that Goddamn teepee?

MAGGIE
Oh, don't be such a hypocrite. We lived in that teepee for six months.

LARRY
Yeah, but we were making a
statement.

MAGGIE
Skip, why don't you and Malone
come live here for a while.
We certainly have the room.
Life needn't be so hard, ya
know.

LARRY
Hey, slow down -- are you
trying to stifle his spirit?

Peter is caught in the middle of a budding family
quarrel, and tries to break the tension.

PETER
We were thinking about making
a no-budget film. Skip
mentioned the camera and...

LARRY
You can't make a no-budget
film. If you want to film,
you need a permit. Before you
can get a permit, you need
insurance. And once you have
a permit, they slap you with
cops, fire advisors, monitors
-- there's no end!

SKIP
We'll film without a permit.

LARRY
Right. And they'll confiscate
all of your, no, all of my
equipment when you get caught.

MAGGIE
Honey, relax. You're getting
yourself all worked up again.
If the boys want to make a
film, why not let them have
their fun? When did you get
so -- materialistic?

Larry gets a stubborn look on his face. Peter seems to
sense the meaning of the look, and appears nervous.

LARRY
I'm going to have to think
this through...

Larry pulls an ornate bong from the bottom of the coffee table, lights it, and takes a deep drag.

EXT. VENICE CANAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Peter and Skip approach Peter's car.

PETER
Couldn't you have just told me
it was your parent's house?

SKIP
Where's the fun in that?

Peter appears angst-ridden.

PETER
So -- what do you think? Is
he going to let us use the
camera and equipment?

Skip shrugs as he opens the car door and starts climbing in.

SKIP
Dunno.

Peter appears exasperated as he stands alone outside the car.

INT. PETER'S GUESTHOUSE - DAY

Peter reviews the stack of overdue bills. A new envelope catches his eye.

It reads:

State of California Film
Commission - Application for
Employment.

Frustrated, Peter opens the envelope, and begins filling out the employment application it contains.

EXT. PETER'S GUESTHOUSE - DAY

Peter pushes his bicycle to the street, the envelope to the Film Commission in his hand. His mailbox looms in the foreground.

He eyes the mailbox, but is soon distracted by a commotion from across the street.

An amateur film crew shoots a scene with a semi-professional video camera. The small crew appears serious, yet full of zeal and ambition.

Peter allows himself a small, reminiscent smile. He puts the envelope in his backpack and rides off.

His mailbox stays in frame.

EXT. SKIP'S TEEPEE - DAY

Peter comes skittering to a halt outside the teepee.

He's about to open the flap.

Skip screams uncontrollably inside the teepee. Malone tries to talk him down, without effect.

Skip comes tearing out of the teepee, a madman. He looks right through Peter and runs screaming down the boardwalk.

Malone emerges, crying.

PETER
Are you okay? What the hell
was that??

MALONE
He's off his medication.

PETER
Jesus fuck!

Malone goes back into the teepee, crying.

Peter, perplexed and disappointed, looks as if he's just experienced the final straw.

EXT. DIVE CAFÉ - DAY (LATER)

Peter enjoys a cup of coffee, the teepee in his line of sight. The envelope lies on the table in front of him.

He sees Skip merrily trouncing down the boardwalk, acting as if nothing unusual had occurred earlier. Peter stuffs the envelope back into the backpack.

SKIP
Hey, Burrito Bandito! What
are you doing here?

PETER
Just having a cup of joe. How
are you feeling?

SKIP
Great. You?

PETER
I'm not the one with the
problem.

Skip appears to take umbrage at the remark, but remains calm.

SKIP
Yes you are. You just don't
know it yet.

PETER
Pfsh. What's my problem?

SKIP
You're suffering a mid-life
crisis. You're stuck between
the need to get a real job,
and the need to fulfill your
fantasy of being a director.

PETER
(poignant)
There are worse problems.

SKIP
Maybe -- but not for you.
You're actually in a position
to realize your dream. The
only things standing in your
way are a lack of cash, a lack
of trust, a lack of vision...

Peter doesn't take the hook.

PETER
I've given a lot of thought to
you, to us. You've got access
to the camera and grip
equipment, and I've got the
know-how. I thought we could
make a good team -- until I
saw you lose it earlier.

SKIP
Just blowing off a little
steam, mijo.

Peter seems to want to believe him, almost.

PETER
I know it's not my business,
but Malone said you aren't
taking your medication...

SKIP
Step off, Jackson.

PETER
I take it back. It is my
business. Maybe I am in a
crisis. And maybe you're just
some crazy homeless guy. But
you've shown me enough to
think that maybe, just maybe,
you could be my -- my savior.

Skip seems to take pride at his suddenly elevated status.

SKIP
That would make you my
apostle, Peter. Get the rest
of my followers rounded up,
and we'll have a film crew!

PETER
No need for blasphemy, dude.
I'll write a horror script
with lots of blood and cheap
effects, very few locations...

SKIP
Whoa, Hoss. What do I get out
of all this?

Peter looks as if hadn't considered that Skip might
actually want something.

PETER
That's a fair question. What
do you want?

Skip ponders the question as if he's suddenly important.

SKIP
I want to write the script.

PETER
(dubious)
Okay, well, we can both write
the script, both take a
producer credit...

SKIP
(sudden; emphatic)
You don't understand. I want
to write the script myself.
(shouting) Do you want to use
my camera or not?

PETER
Okay, okay, settle down.
Look, I've gone to countless
boot camps and seminars to
learn how to write. I think I
should write the script.

Skip slams on the table with both hands, and bolts away
for a few steps before facing Peter with a parting shot.

SKIP
(very loud)
Then forget it!!

Peter wears a defeated look.

EXT. PETER'S GUESTHOUSE - DAY

Peter returns home on his bike.

He slowly removes the envelope addressed to the Film
Commission from his backpack, and places it in the
mailbox.

With a look of regret, he stares at the closed mailbox
for a moment before raising the red flag.